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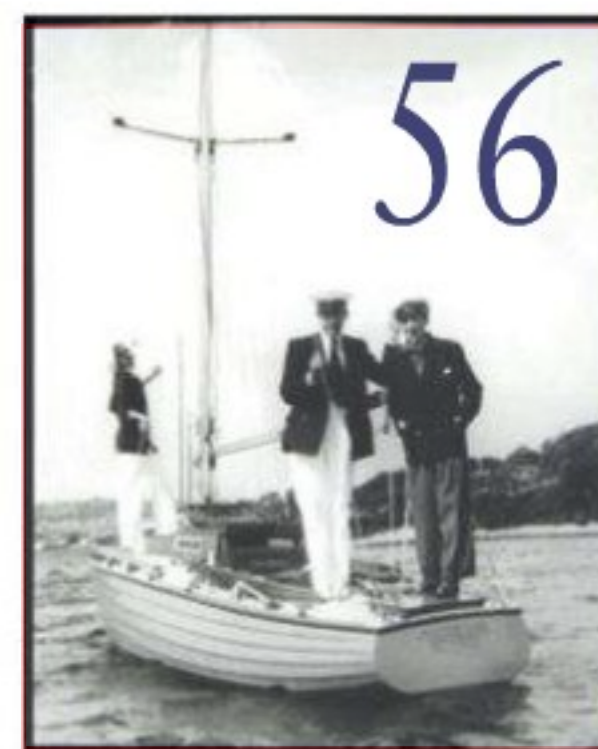
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Classic Yacht Brokers



PAZIENZA – 60 ft Laurent Giles Bermudan Cutter 1956

PAZIENZA designed by Laurent Giles was built by Cantiere Navale V. Beltrami in Genoa in 1956. Laurent Giles seemed to achieve a seamless transition between traditional and modern styling - it is not surprising that PAZIENZA, with her handsome sheers and understated English good looks was down to the last two nominees for the most beautiful boat in France for 2010. This is an excellent indication of her current impressive condition.

POA

Lying France



LUTINE OF HELFORD – 58 ft Laurent Giles Yawl 1952

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Lying UK



WOODPECKER – 70 ft Laurent Giles Motor Yacht 1948

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Lying Malta

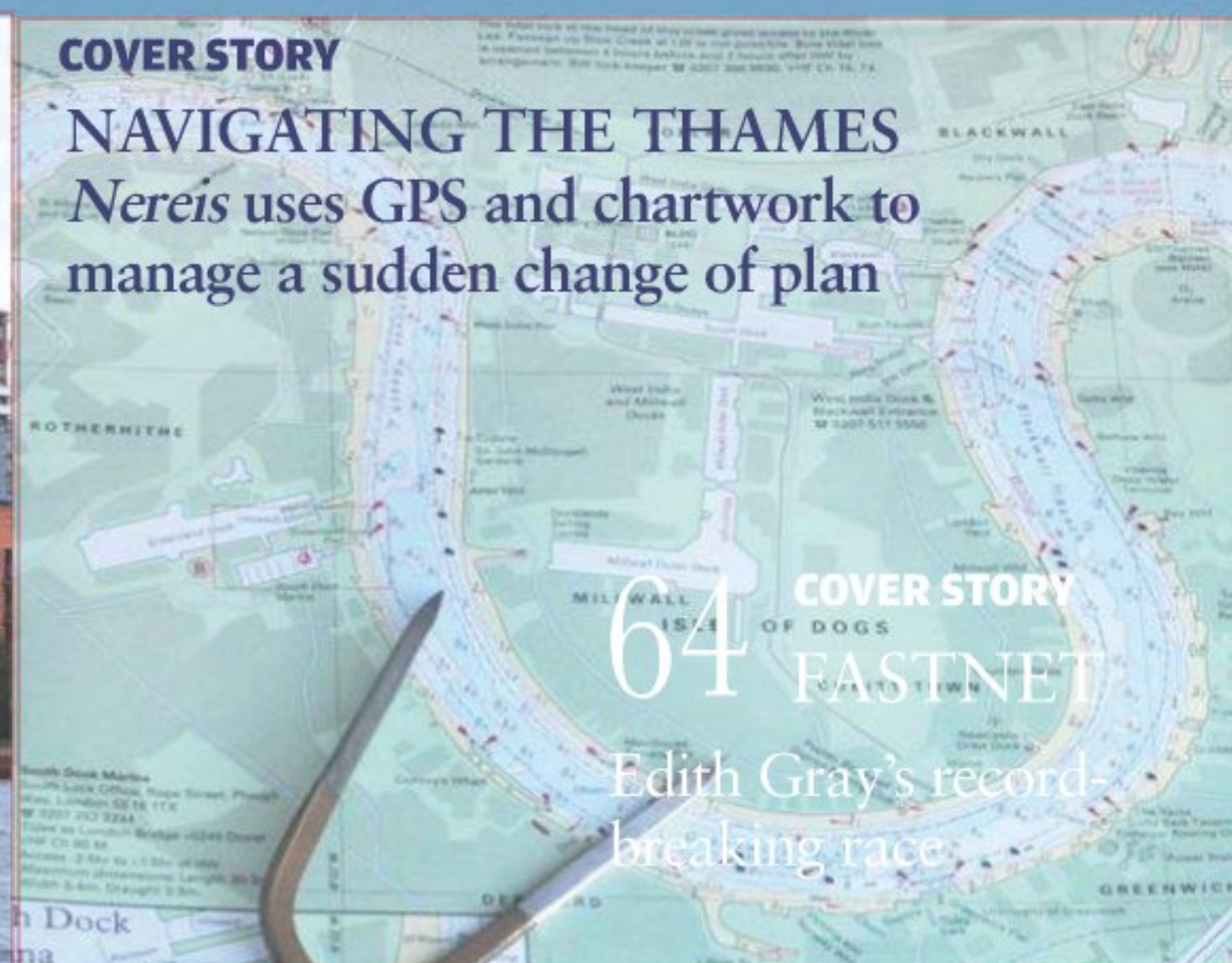
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Liscartan House
127-131 Sloane Street, London SW1X 9AS

EDITORIAL

Editor Dan Houston
+44 (0)207 901 8052
cb@chelseamagazines.com

Deputy Editor Peter Willis
+44 (0)207 901 8053
peter.willis@chelseamagazines.com

Senior Art Editor Peter Smith
+44 (0)207 901 8054
peter.smith@chelseamagazines.com

News Editor Steffan Meyric Hughes
+44 (0)207 901 8055
steffan.meyric-hughes@chelseamagazines.com

Editorial Assistant Julia McDonald
+44 (0)207 901 8007
julia.mcdonald@chelseamagazines.com

Consultant Editor John Perryman FRINA
Publishing Consultant Martin Nott
Proofing Kersti Wagstaff

ADVERTISING

Group Advertisement Manager
Justin Geale +44 (0)207 901 8030
justin.geale@chelseamagazines.com

Senior Sales Executive
Patricia Hubbard +44 (0)207 901 8017
patricia.hubbard@chelseamagazines.com

Senior Sales Executive
Edward Mannering +44 (0)207 901 8016
edward.mannering@chelseamagazines.com

Advertisement production
Allpointsmedia +44 (0)1202 472781
www.allpointsmedia.co.uk

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Managing Director Paul Dobson
Deputy Managing Director Steve Ross
Commercial Director Vicki Gavin
Senior Publisher Sarah Arthur
Digital Publisher Luke Bilton

The Chelsea Magazine Company Ltd
Liscartan House
127-131 Sloane Street, London SW1X 9AS
+44 (0)207 901 8000 www.chelseamagazines.com

FROM DAN HOUSTON, EDITOR

Wood: looks good, does good

Classic boats don't just have timeless appeal, they have beauty and they tend to be proper to their purpose. This is what makes their owners attached to them, causing them to be cared for in a way that, say, a boat less fit for her purpose might not be. OK, so far, so obvious.

As we close this issue and look to the next, our Restoration of the Year feature, which we have celebrated for five years now, is a burgeoning caseload of boats. Good boats too, and always in wood which is just about the only material we ever see being restored. We

**“Ask the
shipwrights, they
love the stuff”**

have yet to see glassfibre, steel or any other material being used for a potential Restoration of the Year candidate for instance, though choice of material would not bar them. But the number of medium to small

boats being restored in any material other than wood seems very few. We can think of larger yachts, like the J-Class *Endeavour* or the Herreshof schooner *Mariette*, restored as steel boats, but for most, restoring a classic means working in wood.

Of course working in wood is good. It's ecological (or can be) and it feels good too – ask the shipwrights; they love the stuff. As for how it looks, how it helps to shape a vessel, from her lines to her deck furniture – well, that will be the main reason people go for wooden boats.

And it's not just restoration any more, it seems more new boats are being built using wood. Some have modern interpretations on an old theme, some are just as they would have been built 100 years ago. There's a very good archive to draw from, so no shortage of design. I have a feeling we are going to see more wooden boats, both restored and built anew.

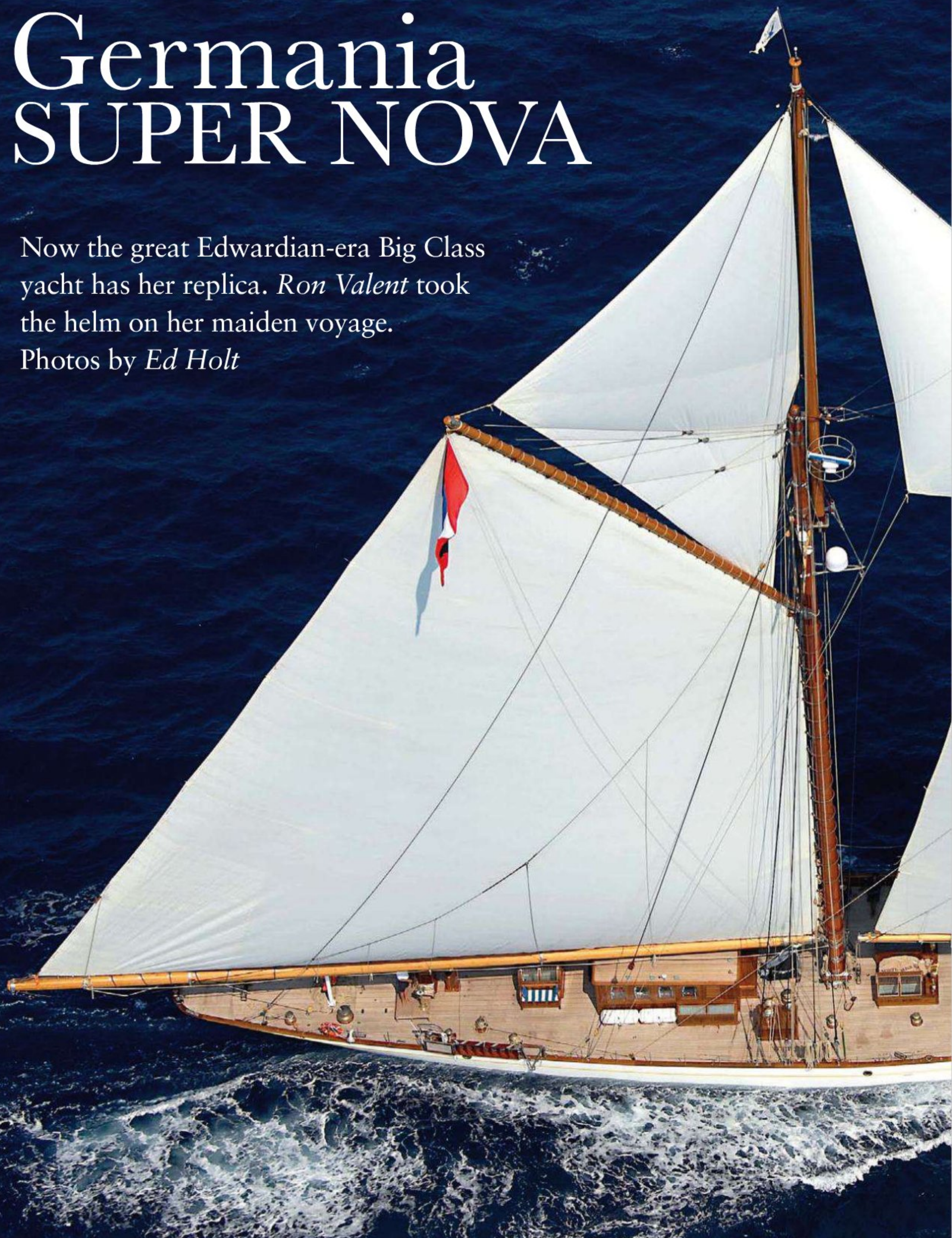


EMILY HARRIS

Germania SUPER NOVA

Now the great Edwardian-era Big Class yacht has her replica. *Ron Valent* took the helm on her maiden voyage.

Photos by *Ed Holt*







Above: Nearly 200ft to the tip of her bowsprit, *Germania Nova* handles as sweetly as a 30-footer

It is somehow fitting that the original *Germania* as well as the original *Britannia* and *Westward* all now lie on the seabed. All three yachts strongly influenced both history as well as yacht design in the Golden Age of yachting between 1893 and 1914 and for many years raced against each other.

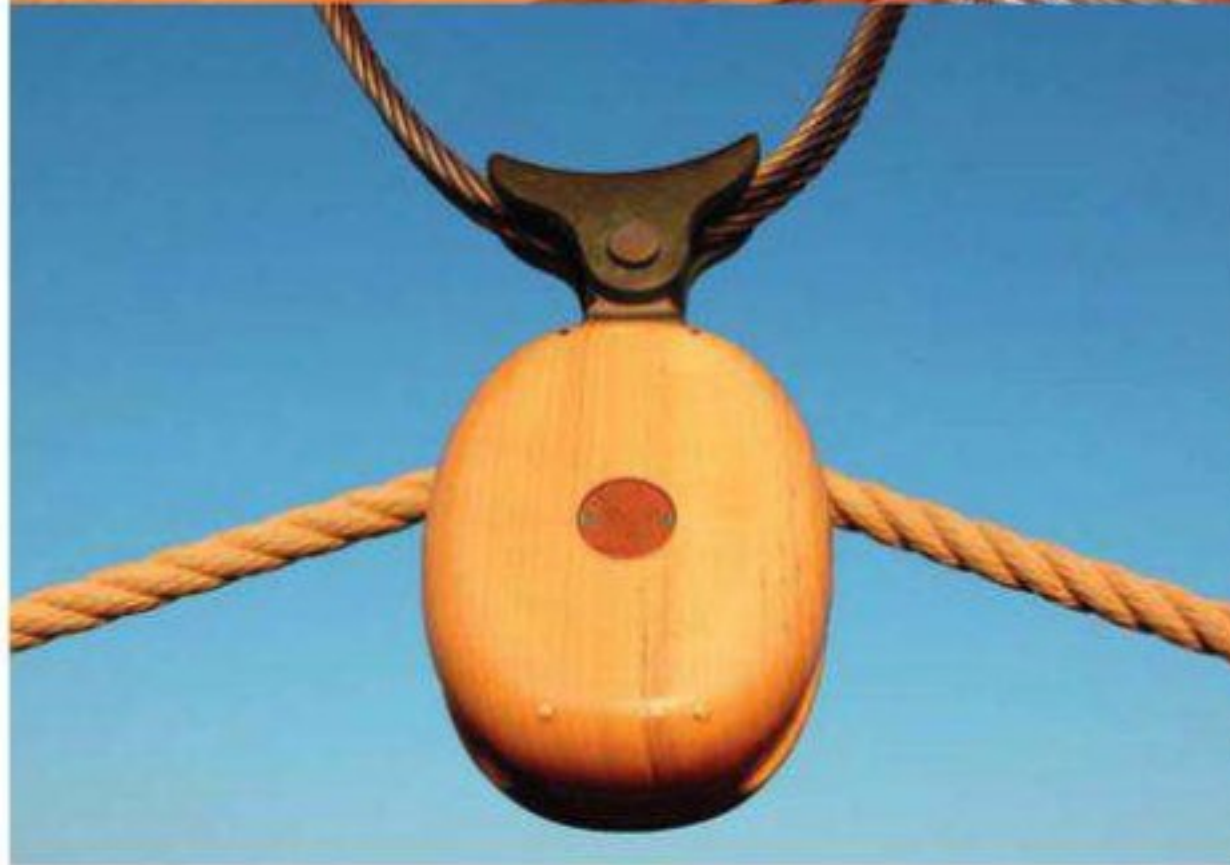
Britannia and *Westward* were sunk intentionally according to their owners' wills in deep trenches in the English Channel, their wrecks covered by tons of dumped surplus World War II ammunition. *Germania* is covered in coral and sand off the coast of Florida after sinking in a storm. Three yachts from the three nations, Great Britain, America and Germany, that defined the cutting edge in yacht design at the beginning of the twentieth century. They also served as political statements in a time when royalty and captains of industry participated in yachting not only for the sport but also for national prestige. These three yachts were designed by three of the greatest minds in naval architecture: GL Watson, Nathanael Herreshoff and Max Oertz. It is difficult to imagine a more impressive line-up for an historic rematch. Now that replicas of all three have been completed it is only a matter of time till we can witness this showdown.

It is 24 May 2011, 103 years almost to the day since *Germania* first graced the waters of the Baltic, and her replica, *Germania Nova*, is underway just eight weeks after her launch. Eight weeks in which her enormous rig

was set up, and right up until we set sail, craftsmen from the yard are hard at work on hundreds of finishing touches. Just minutes after hoisting her sails for the very first time, the mighty schooner roars down the Bay of Marín on the Spanish west coast.

All on board realise that they are experiencing a special moment. Captain John Bardon knows he has a fine racer on his hands and his crew give whoops of delight as *Germania Nova* effortlessly ploughs into the Atlantic swell at almost 14 knots, sending spray 50 feet to either side without faltering in her stride for a moment. My thoughts wander to what she will do when fully trimmed and with her enormous jackyard topsails bent on.

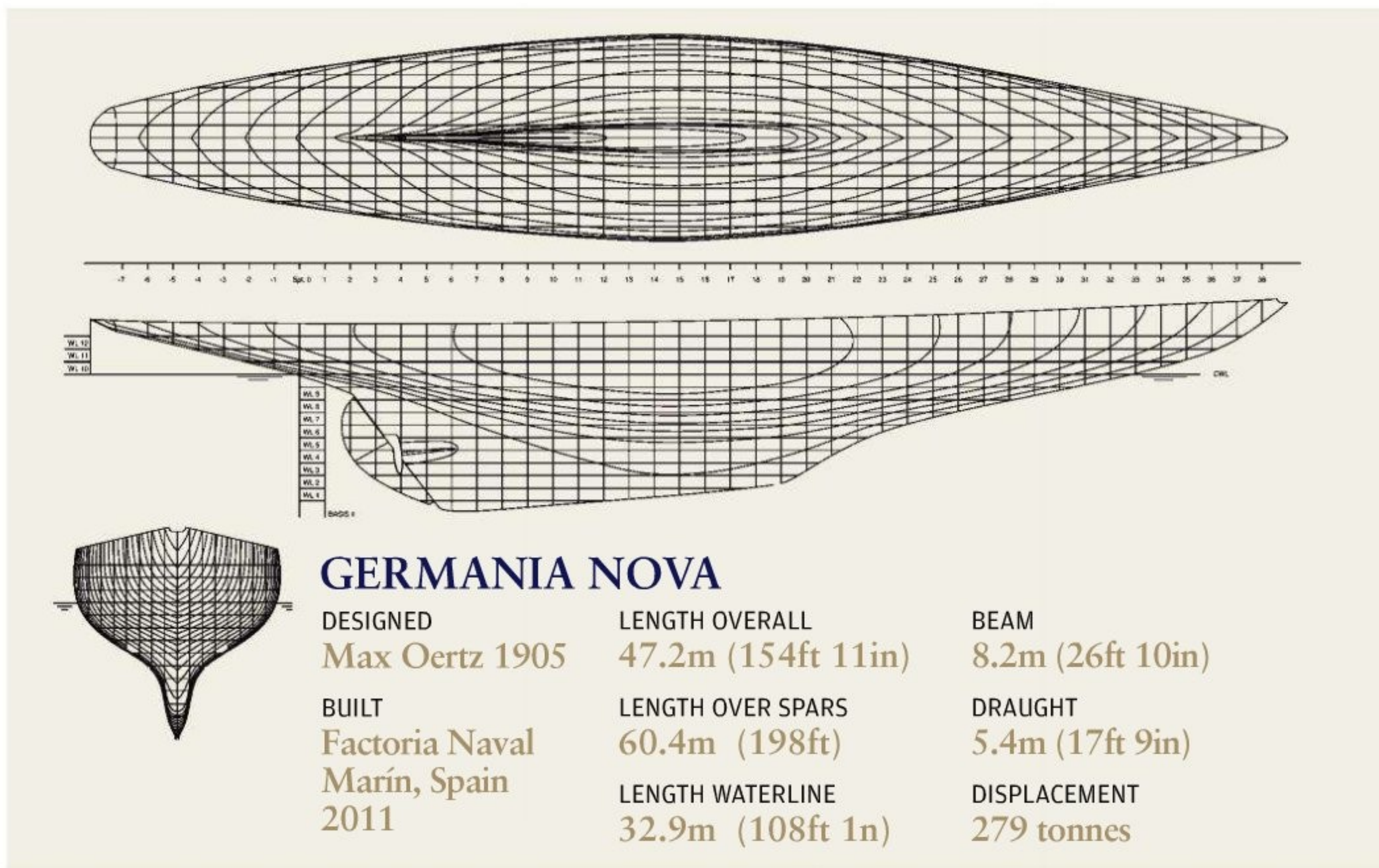
After three years of planning and building, the strain visibly disappears from the faces of project managers Rainer Handtke and naval architect/inspector Detlev Loell as *Germania Nova*'s maiden sail comes off without a hitch – a sure compliment to them and the building team at the Factoria Naval Marín. This is a tense enough moment on any yacht, let alone on a gaff-rigged schooner of more than 60m (198ft) length over spars. On deck she has miles of running rigging, hundreds of wooden blocks and a complicated schooner rig. Down below, luxurious accommodation for owner, guests and crew shares space with a complicated powerhouse of machinery with generators, watermakers, engine, bow thruster, air-conditioning and other modern amenities. Massive back-up battery packs enabling silent running when the



Above: Traditional fittings and details add authenticity
Right: The original *Germania*, photographed in the Solent, 1911, by Beken of Cowes



BEKEN OF COWES



yacht is anchored. Modern superyacht standards mean that this once simple yacht that didn't even have an engine, and where lighting was supplied by oil lamps, has now become an immensely complicated vessel where everything has been squeezed into the relatively narrow hull of a classic schooner.

THE RENAISSANCE CONTINUES

It is generally accepted that the launch of the J-Class *Endeavour* after her restoration on 22 June 1989 from the Royal Huisman Shipyard in the Netherlands heralded the starting point of the New Age of the Classic Yacht – its renaissance, if you will. Although *Altair's* restoration by Southampton Yacht Services two years earlier was certainly on a comparable scale and possibly more authentic, a fully restored J-Class out sailing for the first time in 50-odd years simply seemed to create a bigger stir with both press and public, and the whole classic scene piggy-backed on this new popularity.

Major international brands such as Prada, UBS, Louis Vuitton and, nowadays, watchmaker Panerai stepped in to sponsor the Mediterranean circuit where the events slowly took on cult status. The movement reached its zenith in 2001 with the America's Cup Jubilee in Cowes and the events in Monaco, Cannes and Saint-Tropez that followed a few weeks later. In 2002 *Eleonora*, a replica of the legendary 1910 Herreshoff-designed *Westward*, was launched in the Netherlands.

Suddenly the concept of having a steel replica of a beautiful classic yacht without the maintenance problems of a century-old old wooden vessel became a realistic proposition. Slowly at first, but now gaining more and more momentum, *Eleonora's* example has been followed by a spate of large schooner replicas: the Fife-designed *Sunshine* in 2004; *Elena*, another Herreshoff design and near identical sister ship to *Westward* in 2009, and *Atlantic*, the replica of William Gardner's iconic three-masted schooner in October 2010 and the largest replica to date. At least three others are in progress: *Noëlani*, a recreation of an Alfred Mylne design originally called *Panda*, the 1903 Herreshoff *Ingomar*, and a 1927 John Alden-designed three-masted schooner that was never built. Meanwhile three new J-Class yachts have been launched and a further four, at least, are in build or at the planning stage.

'GERMAN FROM TO KEEL TO MASTHEAD'

At the end of the 19th century the rivalry between the up-and-coming Hapsburg German Kaiser and his cousin the British King caused an arms race that would eventually culminate in the First World War in 1914. But there was equal competition in the more mundane pastime of yachting. The Kaiser owned a succession of yachts with which he challenged the British monopoly in Big Class racing. At first these yachts were designed and built in Britain and America and even crewed by British



captains and sailors. The Kaiser's *Meteor I* and *II* were British and designed by Fife and Watson respectively, while *Meteor III* by Cary Smith was built in America.

Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach was a keen sailor and as a member of the industrial elite of Germany was keen to prove to his friend the Kaiser that a German naval architect and a German yard could design and build a yacht that could be as good as or even better than the 'Britishers' could make. He turned to Max Oertz, who at that point was Germany's leading designer although he did not have a lot of experience with yachts the size of the one he was about to produce. In April 1908 *Germania* was launched at the Krupp yard in Kiel and at her launch the newspapers proudly proclaimed her heritage: "German from her keel to her masthead".

Naturally she also had a German crew. She was quickly fitted out, and on 9 June 1908 *Germania* had her first sail, later that month participating in several races in the Baltic where her main opposition came from the Kaiser's *Meteor III* and *Hamburg*.

In her first season at Cowes a few weeks later she sailed into the history books in the Royal Yacht Squadron Race in which the prize was the prestigious Kaiserpokal, a cup offered by the Kaiser. Although it was her first season, *Germania* beat *Meteor's* 1902 record by 15 minutes. She sailed the distance of about 47nM in 3 hours 35 minutes and 11 seconds at an average speed of 13.1 knots. Oertz had certainly designed a winner.



Above and left: The predominantly white interior follows tradition; the boat is fitted out for comfortable cruising as well as racing



“The build team are confident that in her hull, rig and on deck she is an exact replica of Max Oertz’s original masterpiece”



Above: Deck fittings have the correct period feel

In the next six years *Germania* continued to be one of the most successful schooners in the fleet, only really being consistently beaten by the American *Westward* when she came across to Europe to race, and in 1914, at the very end of her racing career, against the new, Nicholson-designed super schooner *Margherita*. As a result of *Germania*’s success in her first season, the Kaiser ordered a new yacht that same year, also to be designed by Oertz and built by Krupp. In the spring of 1909 *Meteor IV* was launched.

In 1914 *Germania*’s luck changed for the worse, and from then onward her life consisted of a series of mishaps and disasters that ended with her demise only 16 years later. She was sailing along the English South Coast on her way to Cowes Week when the series of events started that would lead to the First World War. While in Southampton for a repair to her keel, war was declared and her Navy crew were quickly shipped home. *Germania* herself was confiscated by British customs officials.

Three years later she was sold at auction to an American. Renamed *Exen*, she crossed the Atlantic, never to return to Europe. In 1921 she was sold to former Assistant Secretary of the US Navy Gordon Woodbury. He renamed the yacht *Half Moon* after the famed ship of 17th century explorer Henry Hudson. Shortly after this she was badly damaged when a hurricane struck her off the coast of Virginia. Woodbury, who felt lucky to have survived the experience, immediately sold her. She then

changed hands several times, her mast and lead keel were removed, and finally she ended up as a floating restaurant on the Miami River. In 1926 she sank at her mooring, then raised and refitted as a fishing barge and bar. In 1930 she was anchored off the coast of Florida when disaster struck in another hurricane. The anchor chains of the once proud yacht broke and she was driven onto a reef, damaged beyond repair and forgotten.

Fifty-seven years later the wreck was rediscovered by divers. Since 31 May 2001 she has been declared an Underwater National Preserve and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In the clear shallow water covering the reef her hull and shape can easily be seen at low tide.

AN AUTHENTIC REPLICA

The design archives of the likes of Herreshoff, Watson and Fife have been carefully preserved, so researching and then building a replica of one of their designs is a relatively straightforward process. The plans for *Germania* on the other hand have been lost, and the only copies still existing were those that had been published in yachting periodicals from the spring of 1908 such as the *German Yacht*. Building a 47m (155ft) superyacht using faded black and white photographs and small-scaled drawings only five or so inches long was no easy feat for the design team. An original model of the yacht was found and carefully studied.



The build team behind *Germania Nova* are confident that they have faithfully reproduced her and that in her hull, rig and on deck she is an exact replica of Max Oertz's original masterpiece. The only areas where concessions had to be made were necessitated by the owner's wish that she comply with the stringent requirements of Germanische Lloyd and the Maritime Coastguard Agency. But most of these technical modifications are out of sight below.

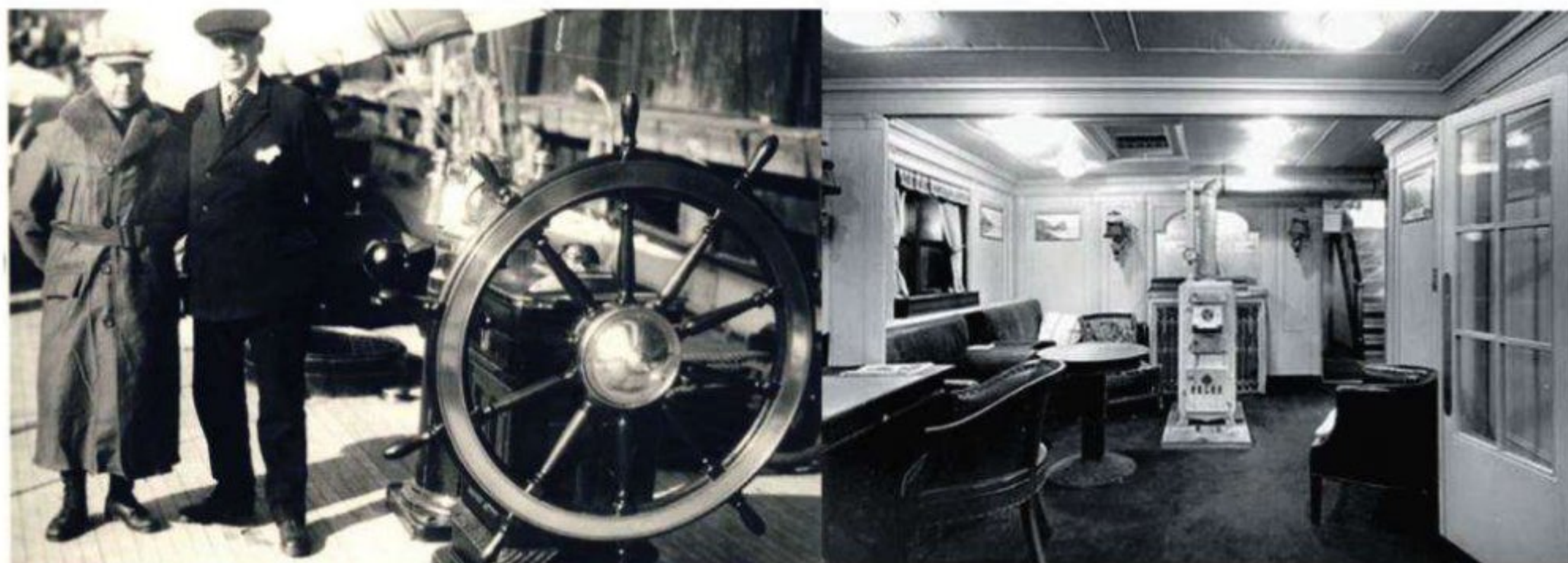
Naturally all these modernisations, as well as the creature comforts installed, have had an effect on her weight distribution and had to be balanced elsewhere. Her new hollow spars were built in Holland by Ventis utilising modern glue techniques, making them much lighter than her original solid ones. Her Dacron North Sails are several tons lighter than the original cotton set.

Another example of the depth of dedication the building team had to getting every detail correct are the winches. Even before construction on the yacht itself had started, custom winch maker Holmatro in the Netherlands was approached with the request to design winches that would look period correct on a yacht from 1908. So no modern self-tailing machinery with a tacky bronze coating to make them look the part, but full bronze winches that could have come out of a Davey & Co catalogue dating from the same year as *Germania's* launch. Over the past 20 years Holmatro has made its name with classic winches outfitting yachts ranging from



Above: On deck
Left: Owner's cabin
Below left: Galley





Left: The main saloon of the original *Germania* – note the large, centrally-placed stove

Above: Charles Francis Adams and owner Gordon Woodbury on board schooner *Half Moon* (ex-*Exen*, ex-*Germania*) in 1922

Dorade, *Stormy Weather* and the Panerai yacht *Eilean* all the way through to the Big Class Yachts *Mariette*, *Mariquita*, *Lulworth* and *Eleonora*. In the case of *Germania Nova* old photographs of the original *Germania*'s capstan with its rounded-off top were the inspiration. The resulting winches certainly look as if they have always been there.

As can be seen on old photographs of the interior of the original *Germania*, her main colour theme was white. Naturally this has been faithfully reproduced and the effect is quite pleasing. If overdone it can give a cold, clinical effect, but in the case of *Germania Nova*, the white interior is balanced by the mahogany trimming on panelling, cupboards, desks, beds and tables in combination with the varnished teak floor. This gives a surprisingly fresh and cool result without having a detrimental effect on the cosiness and warmth that one is accustomed to down below on a classic yacht. The owners of *Germania Nova* therefore deserve a compliment for the way that in this area too they have remained completely faithful to the original style.

PERFECT BALANCE

When *Germania Nova* set out on her maiden sail I had the extreme good fortune to be the only journalist allowed on board. After seeing the grin of satisfaction on Captain Bardon's face I was itching to have a go at steering her myself and to my eternal joy was given just that chance. Yachts this size and gaff schooners in particular are sometimes a little slow in reacting to movements of the rudder, and helmsmen on boats like this have to be quite fit. A yacht with a displacement of 280 tons, a waterline length of 33m (108ft) and a long, 5.4m (17ft 9in) deep keel is something to treat with respect, and room to manoeuvre should be allowed for and planned well ahead.

To my surprise steering *Germania Nova* proved to be as smooth as a 30ft (9m) yacht. A few turns of the wheel had the distant mountains of the Spanish coast slipping past the tip of my bowsprit which was over 50m (162ft)

away! Despite her size there was still contact with the sea that hissed by just feet away from where I stood on the raised steering position. The feeling of being on a steam train flying down the tracks was the first thought that came to my mind.

This feeling was enhanced by the way she tracked so perfectly. Even on a 280-ton schooner the famous words of Sherman Hoyt still apply: "A helmsman does not increase a boat's speed through the water, he impedes it!" Although spoken many years before she was built, this certainly applies to *Germania Nova*. Seldom have I steered a boat that was so well balanced and had such a neutral steering. Let go the helm and the yacht simply continues in a perfect straight line. Max Oertz was an extremely talented designer who not only studied the yachts of his contemporaries but also dared to go further.

The first day of sailing was over much too soon, but not without giving an impression of the possibilities of this magnificent yacht. For magnificent she surely is. Up to now the biggest schooners racing in the classic fleet were *Eleonora* and *Elena*, both 41.6m (136ft 6in) over deck. *Elena* has a slightly larger rig than her sister and her longer boom and bowsprit stretch her to 55m (180ft 6in) over all. *Elena*'s boom is 23m (75ft 6in) long and she weighs in at 215 tons.

Germania Nova is 47.2m (155ft) over deck and 60.4m (198ft) over all. Her boom is 26m (85ft 4in) long and her main gaff is 16.2m (53ft) long – it could double as a mast on a quite sizeable yacht! Yet she is set up so that her 13 crew can handle her with ease in any situation.

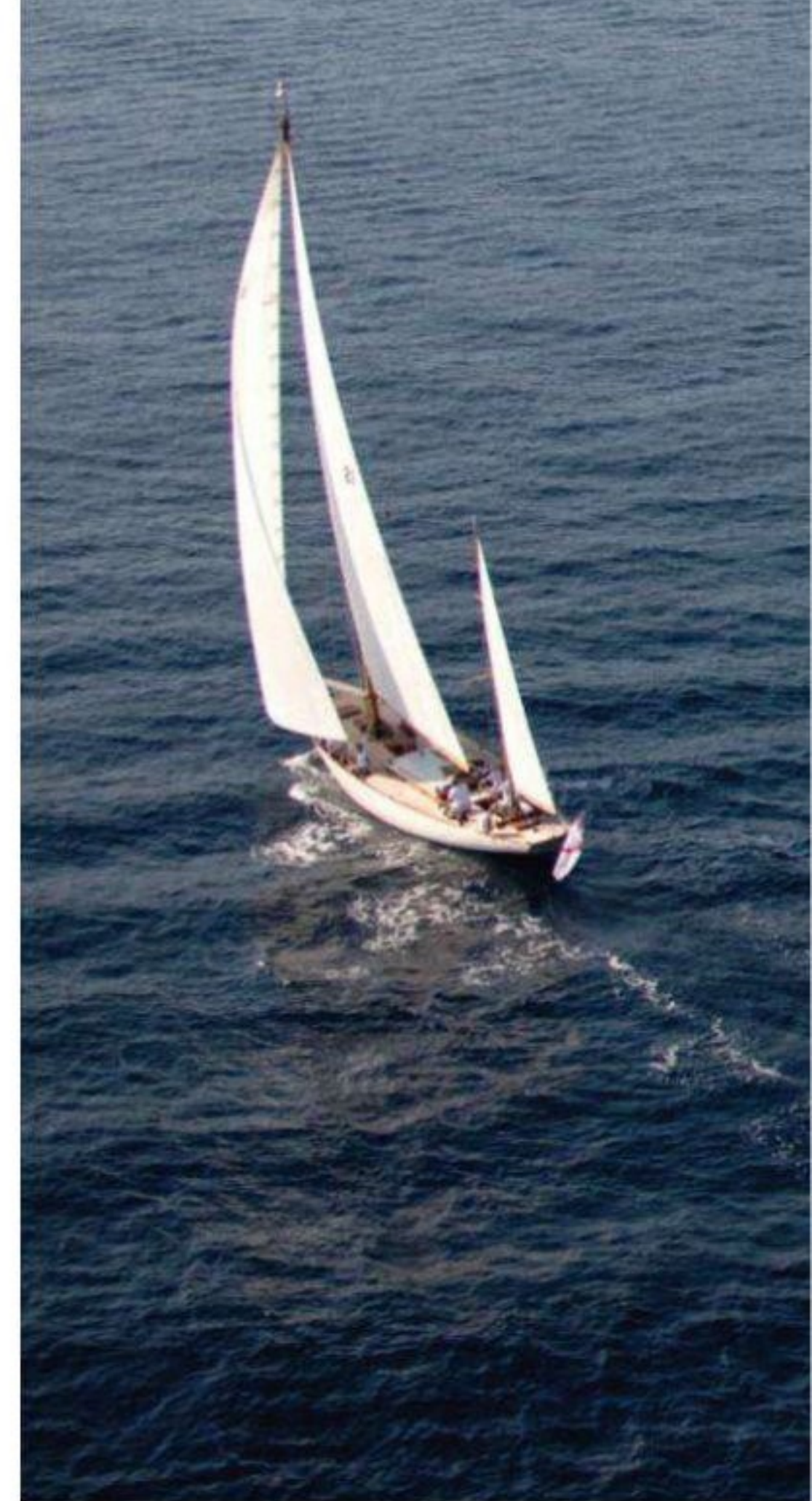
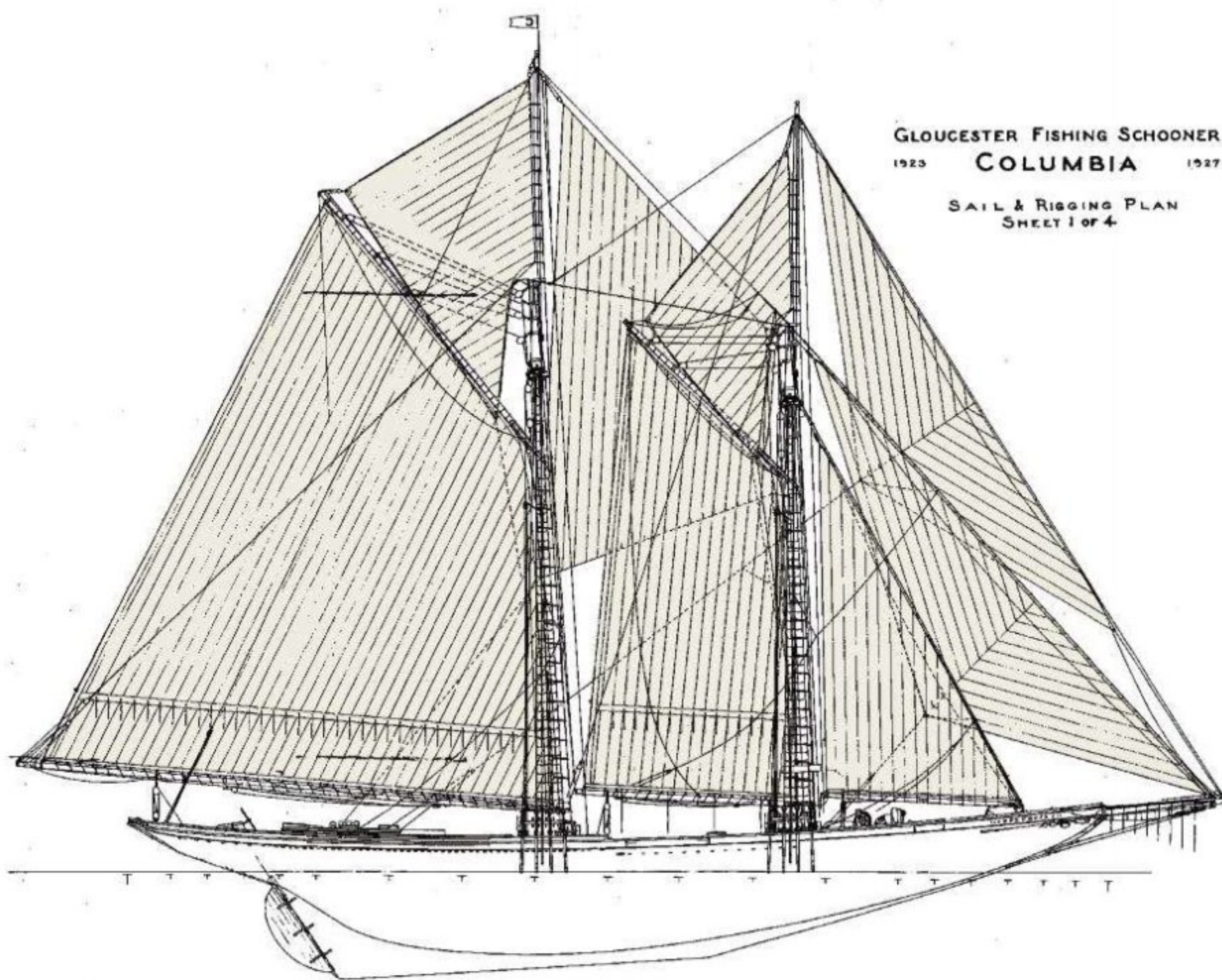
In 2011 *Germania Nova* had her owner and his family on board for nearly four months when she did an extensive Mediterranean cruise. He is clearly someone who appreciates her both as a racing schooner as well as a comfortable cruiser. In 2012 *Germania Nova* is expected to join her sisters at the major regattas in Italy and France, and the prospect of seeing her crossing the starting line alongside *Mariette*, *Elena*, *Eleonora*, *Altair*, *Atlantic* and *Sunshine* – and maybe *Britannia* too – is truly an exciting one.



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REPLICA GLOUCESTERMAN IN BUILD IN FLORIDA

Schooner Columbia to sail again

Thousands of miles from the traditional yards of New England, the William Starling Burgess-designed *Columbia's* hull has just reached completion at Florida's Eastern Shipbuilding Group.

The rebuild, for Boston sailor Brian D'Isernia, started about a year ago and has been progressing in fits and starts in 'down time' from the tugs and ferries that form the yard's core business, according to her third-generation Maine emigré boatbuilder Jacob Stevens.

Things are now moving quickly. Systems will be installed over the next two months and Covey Island Boatworks in Canada's Nova Scotia is to shape all 10 of her spars.

Covey Island is part of the Lunenburg Shipyard Alliance, now rebuilding the 1963 fishing schooner, *Bluenose II* – a replica of the original *Bluenose*, the Canadian schooner

that raced against *Columbia* and her ilk in the fishing schooner races of the 1920s.

Brian D'Isernia has long held a dream to replicate the 1923 *Columbia* for her beauty (her sawn-off counter compares well against *Bluenose II's* transom) and although CB was unable to reach him in time to confirm, a re-match between these two very similar boats will surely prove too good to pass up.

The original *Bluenose* sank on a reef in Haiti in 1946 and the original *Columbia* sank off Sable Island with all hands in a summer gale in 1927.

The extraordinary tale of this era of the fast fishing schooners of America's eastern seaboard will be aired in a two-part National Geographic TV documentary next year, titled *The Wind Catchers*. The programmes will focus on *Bluenose* and *Columbia*.

COLUMBIA

LOD
141ft
(43m)

LWL
110ft
(33.6m)

BEAM
25ft 8in
(7.8m)

DRAUGHT
15ft 7in
(4.8m)

SAIL AREA
10,290sqft
(956m²)

J-CLASS TO GROW

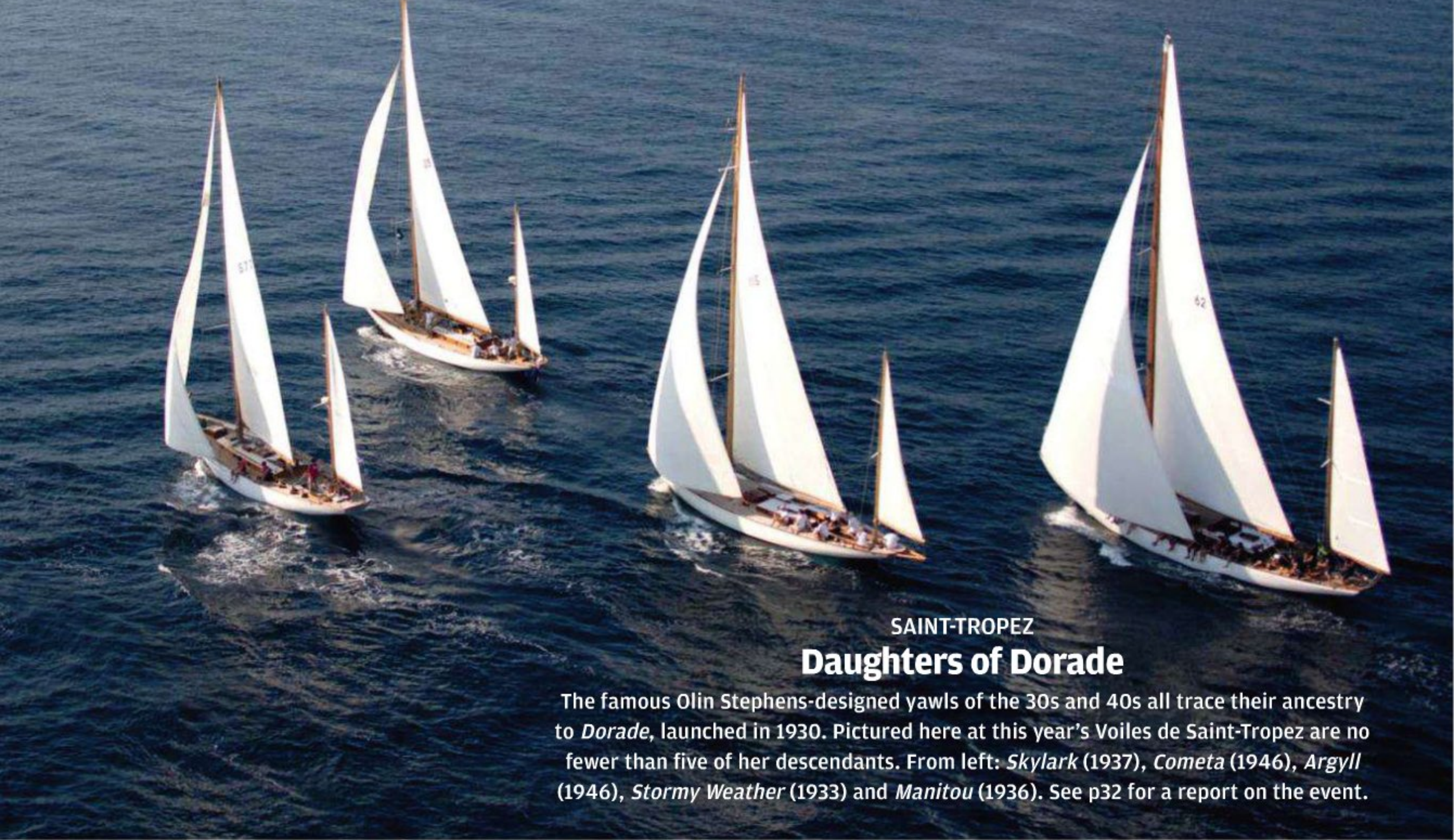
New J-Class Enterprise announced

A project to build *Enterprise* has been announced by the J-Class Association. *Enterprise*, a William Starling Burgess design, won the first America's Cup to be contested in J-Class yachts against *Shamrock V*, the Charles Nicholson-designed challenger from the famous British yachting backer Sir Thomas Lipton (CB277).

It is early stages yet for the project, with the design still to be ratified by the association, but if she goes into build, she will become the eighth J either afloat or in build today, a greater number than ever existed during their heyday of the 1930s.

News is also expected on plans to build two Js that were never originally built: *Svea*, a Tore Holm design, and *Yankee*, designed by Frank C Paine.

Next year's special J-Class regattas, to be held off Falmouth, Cornwall, and in the Solent, are shaping up well with most of the fleet expressing interest.



SAINT-TROPEZ Daughters of Dorade

The famous Olin Stephens-designed yawls of the 30s and 40s all trace their ancestry to *Dorade*, launched in 1930. Pictured here at this year's Voiles de Saint-Tropez are no fewer than five of her descendants. From left: *Skylark* (1937), *Cometa* (1946), *Argyll* (1946), *Stormy Weather* (1933) and *Manitou* (1936). See p32 for a report on the event.

KOS

CITY OF ADELAIDE

Cradle on the way from Australia

A 100-ton steel cradle, packed into four shipping containers, is about to leave Australia for Scotland, where it is intended to be re-erected around the clipper ship *City of Adelaide* to transport her back to Port Adelaide, South Australia, next year. The cradle, built by volunteers with donated steel, has been organised by

the Clipper Ship City of Adelaide Ltd (CSCoAL) which is currently Historic Scotland's provisional preferred bidder to take charge of the hull and remove it from its current location on a slipway in Irvine.

However, CSCoAL has still to prove it has the funding, support and site for the ship, and to satisfy the



City of Adelaide
- permission to
move?

conditions of National Historic Ships on which an export licence would depend. *City of Adelaide* is currently a Class A listed building in Scotland and there are fears that the complex chain of devolution surrounding decisions on her future could result in her leaving the UK without proper processes having taken place.

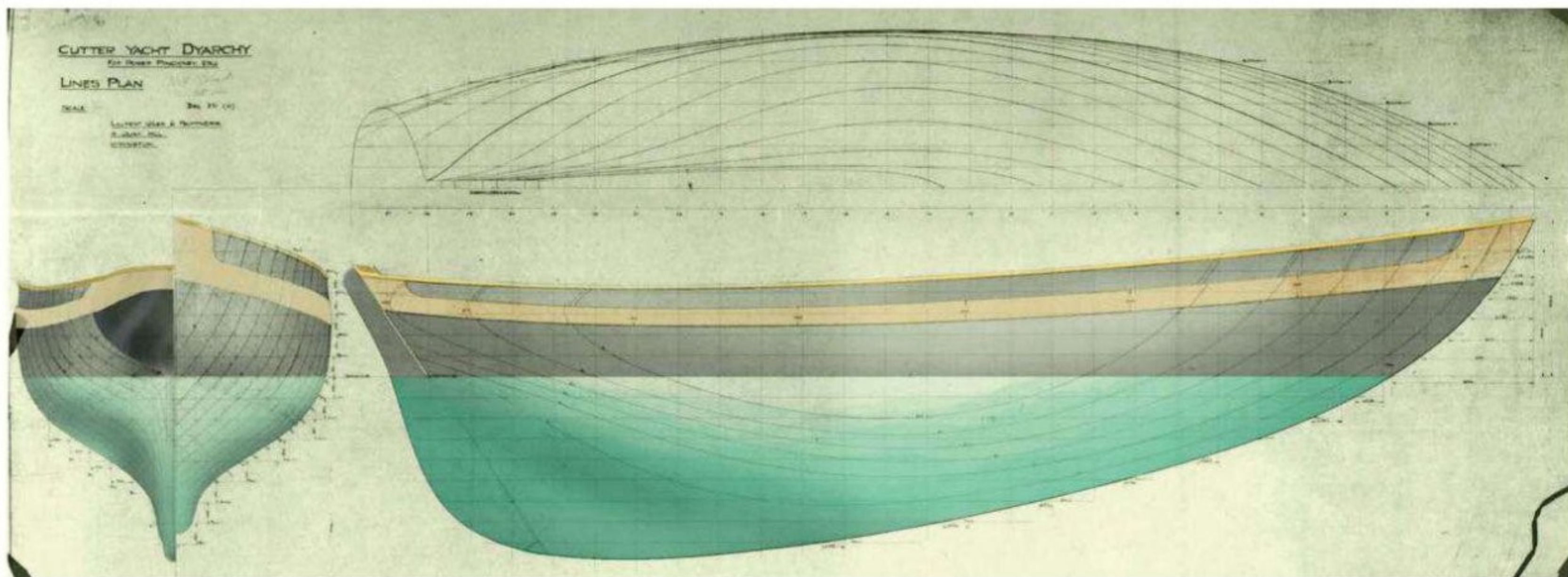


Oldest Alden afloat?

Eveline, built in Shanghai in 1911, is perhaps the oldest surviving western yacht in Asia. She's a gaff-rigged cutter of 13.3m (43ft 8in), although a

short boom suggests she may originally have been a yawl. If this is the case, it's likely that she's the oldest yacht afloat designed by the American John G Alden, as, in respects other than the rig, she matches a contemporary design by him. After the war, she was resident in Singapore, where, as well as sailing, she was a party boat for ex-pat high society, with high commissioners and aristocrats enjoying "excessively liquid" nights on board. Later, she was used in a number of advertisements for Dunhill cigarettes. She was substantially rebuilt 1996-8 by the Sumber Samudra Shipyard in Telu Intan, Malaysia. In 2005, she nearly sank after a collision with another yacht while racing in Thailand's King's Cup, but thankfully lived to tell the tale. Today, she's British owned and sailing out of Malaysia.





PLANS FOR SALE

Laurent Giles design archives online

The largest British yacht design archive, that of Laurent Giles, has gone online and designs are available to buy for new-builds or restorations.

Giles was the pre-eminent British yacht designer of his era (the mid-20th century); his innovations included the first deck-stepped mast for a cruising yacht, the ground-

breaking *Myth of Malham* ocean-racing cutter and micro cruisers *Trekka* and *Sopranino* (see p52). He designed yachts to rate favourably under competitive modern RORC rules – but it was one of his most conservative designs that has had the most lasting appeal: the seaworthy, globe-girdling 25ft (8m) Vertue class.

Above: The lines of *Dyarchy*, designed after a Bristol Channel pilot cutter – although the finished yacht more resembled a scaled-up Vertue

The website lists 1,383 designs with hand-tinted display drawings, study notes, plans for models and full-scale yachts. It is the grand project of Barry Van Geffen, who started his design career with Laurent Giles and Partners in 1971, launching his own design firm in 2007. www.laurentgilesarchive.com



HMS VICTORY

Final topmast removed

The final mast removal on HMS *Victory* took place on 22 September with the removal of the mizzen topmast as part of the restoration work taking place on Nelson's flagship at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard by Ian Bell, stalwart of our annual feature stand at the London Boat Show. The National Museum of the Royal Navy's Director General, Professor Dominic Tweddle, said: "With her topmasts down, *Victory* will look much as she did after the Battle of Trafalgar when she had to be towed to Gibraltar for repairs."

VOLVO RACE Legends reunion

'Legends' from the history of the Volvo Ocean Race, the round-the-world sailing race for crewed yachts, gathered with the original fleet in Alicante, Spain, to celebrate the race's history, which started in 1973 under its then sponsor, Whitbread, from 1 to 5 November, before the race proper started with its first leg to Cape Town.

RECYCLED WOOD Beat of the sea

Most of us associate sailing with gentle sounds like the swish of forefoot on water, but Tim Broughton has fashioned a snare drum out of part of the sailing barge *Hydrogen*, built 1906.

Hydrogen is still sailing: the drum was carved from a solid block of iroko which was originally part of the rigging chock on the port side of the deck. Other drums have been built from parts of the great ocean liner SS *Olympia*, a Jaguar engine, a Spitfire and part of a NASA rocket.

See www.provenancedrums.com for more.



WORD OF THE MONTH

RAISING IRON

A tool for clearing the pitch and oakum out of the seams, previous to their being caulked afresh.

SAN DIEGO

Hall of Fame brought to life

More than 30 years ago it was not unusual to see legendary sailors Ted Turner and Dennis Conner at docks around the world, trading remarks while preparing to spar on the water.

In a much less adversarial situation, the two joined 13 others at the San Diego Yacht Club for the National Sailing Hall of Fame's first ever induction ceremony in October.

Conner was given his first shot at America's Cup stardom crewing for Turner in the 1974 trials. Since then, the two have been synonymous with the Cup.

Not all of their fellow inductees are living. The titles of those who had died, including the late Olin Stephens, Nat Herreshoff, solo circumnavigator Joshua Slocum and legendary skipper Charlie Barr, were presented posthumously to relatives.

The list represents a unique cross section of the sport, covering more than a century.



Front from row, left to right: Olin Stephens IV, grandson of posthumous inductee Olin Stephens; Ted Turner; Buddy Melges; Betsy Alison; Dennis Conner; Gary Jobson, Hobie Alter (seated); middle row: Ted Hood; Leanne Dyson, great niece of Charlie Barr; Michael Slocum, great-grandson of Joshua Slocum; Halsey Herreshoff, grandson of Capt. Nat Herreshoff; Gladys Szapary, cousin of Harold S. Vanderbilt; back row: Jack Mosbacher, grandson of Bus Mosbacher; Paul Cayard

Dinner on Dennis Conner

Classics gathered in New York Harbour on 12 October for the annual New York Classics. America's Cup legend Dennis Conner, who also won our 2010 Restoration of the Year award for the restoration of his BB Crowninshield schooner *Fame*, was present and treated all crew to a steak dinner.



RHODE ISLAND RAID

Sixth archipelago rally

The sixth Annual Archipelago Rally, held this year at Wickford Cove, Rhode Island, saw 28 craft, ranging from a replica of a 1909 16/30 canoe ketch (like the ones Uffa Fox raced) to a modern rotomoulded Bug. 'Indian summer' sums up the weather and of the attendees 29 were children. There is no entry fee, people bring food and drink and slowest boats start first according to their Portsmouth Yardstick Rating. *Chris Museler*

GANNON AND BENJAMIN

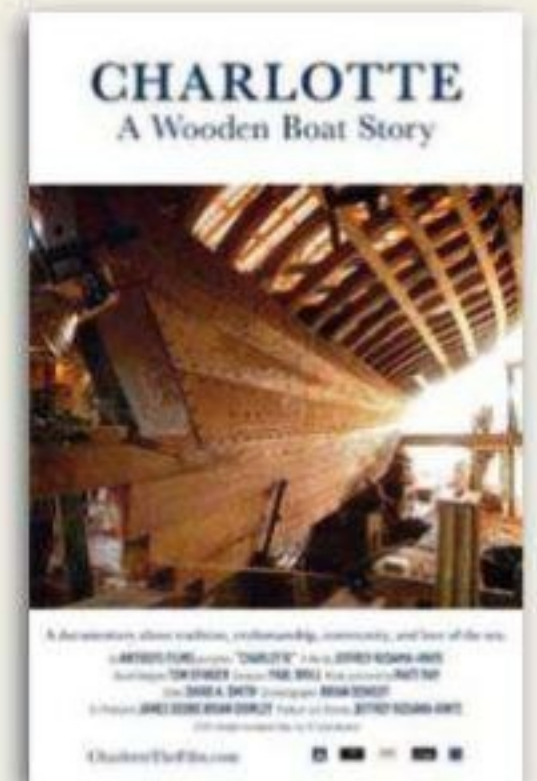
Documentary film on building a schooner

Though it seems traditional wooden boatbuilding is no longer a dying art, the interestingly similar art of documentary filmmaking using real 16mm film surely is. The marriage of the two crafts delicately drives this point home in the film *Charlotte: A Wooden Boat Story*, by producer and filmmaker Jeffrey Kusama-Hinte.

The film, shown last summer at the Wooden Boat Festival in Mystic, Connecticut, and recently in Newport, Rhode Island, documents the build of a schooner (she was launched in 2007) at Gannon & Benjamin on Martha's Vineyard. The film in the verité style with no narration in the footage, was shot over a four-year period.

"You have to get into a sort of meditative state when you watch the film," said Kusama-Hinte at the showing in Newport. What this style of film uncovers is not only the lifestyle of wooden boat artisans, in this case Nat Benjamin and Ross Gannon who had designed and built the boat for himself and friends, but the supportive and loving community this boatbuilding company is set within.

Not only is the storyline dreamy, with the slow and deliberate work progress from season to season on a variety of wooden craft, but the cinematography and saturation of the images gives an authenticity not seen in modern films.





MYLNE BOLT 18

THE CLASSIC ELECTRIC TENDER



NEW ZEALAND

New Auckland races

It might be mid-winter in the northern hemisphere but in New Zealand the summer sailing season is in full swing with new features like two days of short harbour course racing with the Northcote Birkenhead Yacht Club on 5 November and 3 March.

Also new this season, the Classic Yacht Association of New Zealand will be stage an overnight cruising race to Man-O-War Bay at the eastern end of Waiheke Island (20 miles

east of Auckland) from 10 to 11 March, including a beach barbeque and wine-tasting at the famous vineyard. Overseas visitors are especially welcome to this event.

The usual climax of the season will be around late January through to mid-February with the Mahurangi Festival, Auckland Anniversary Regatta and the CYANZ annual three day, four-race regatta. *Chad Thompson*

Coming up...

New Zealand

3-4 December Mark Foy Race:
Auckland to Patio Bay

28 January Mahurangi Festival

10-12 February
CYANZ Regatta, Auckland

10 March
CYANZ race: Auckland to Man-o-War Bay (Waikheke Island)

31 March - 1 April
CYANZ race
Auckland Harbour to Islington Bay

15 April
Ponsonby Cruising Club Vintage and Veterans Regatta (Auckland)

For details of all these events, contact the Classic Yacht Association of New Zealand, www.classicyacht.org.nz

Australia

26-29 January
Geelong Festival of Sail
www.classic-yacht.asn.au

27 January
176th Australia Day Regatta
Australia's longest-running regatta in Sydney's famous harbour, with a classic class of at least 50 boats
www.australiadayregatta.com.au



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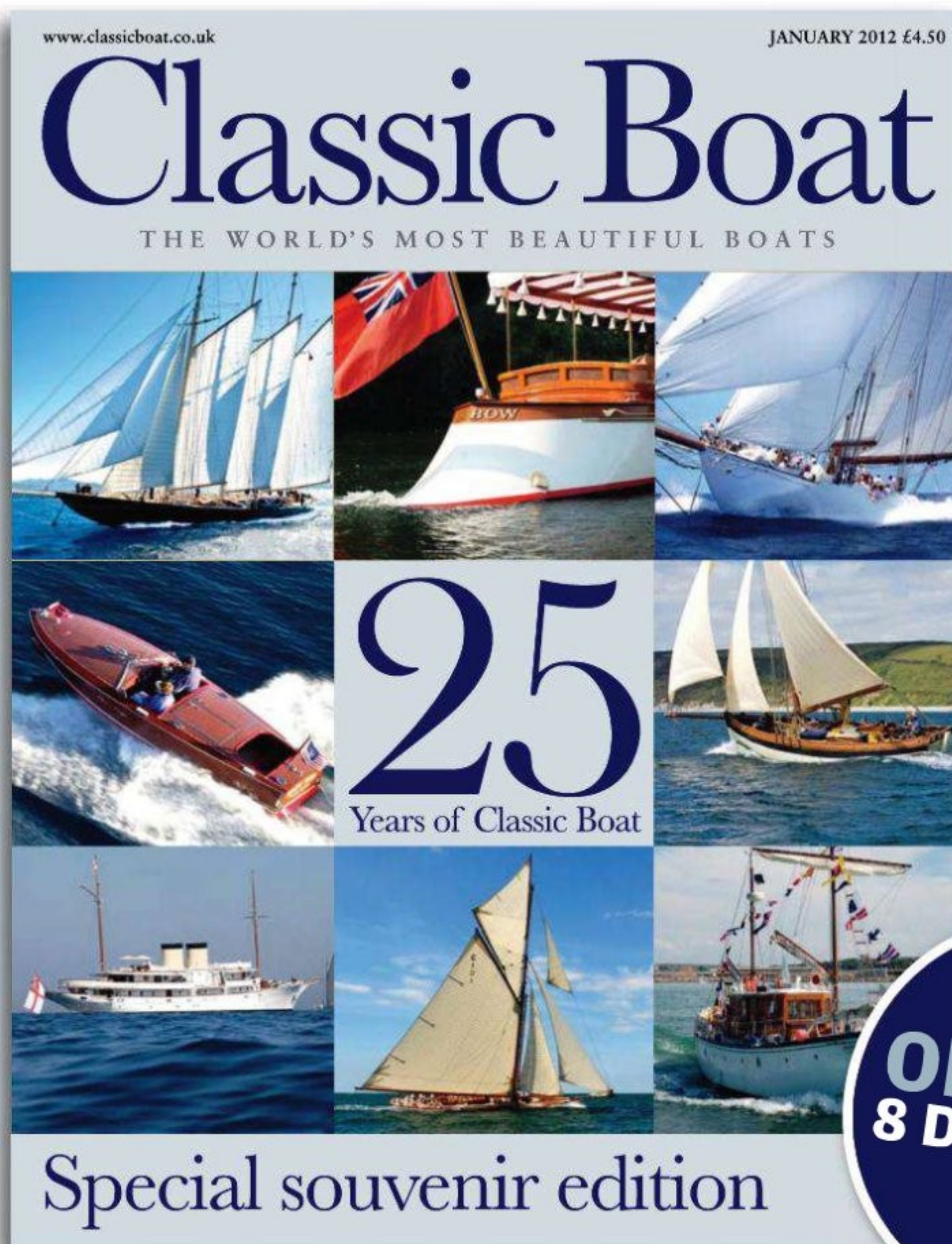
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**ON SALE
8 DECEMBER**

Featuring...

RESTORATION OF THE YEAR THE SHORTLIST

There have been some stunning restorations this year and the standard of craftsmanship continues to improve; we highlight our favourites.

The 15-Metres and Hispania

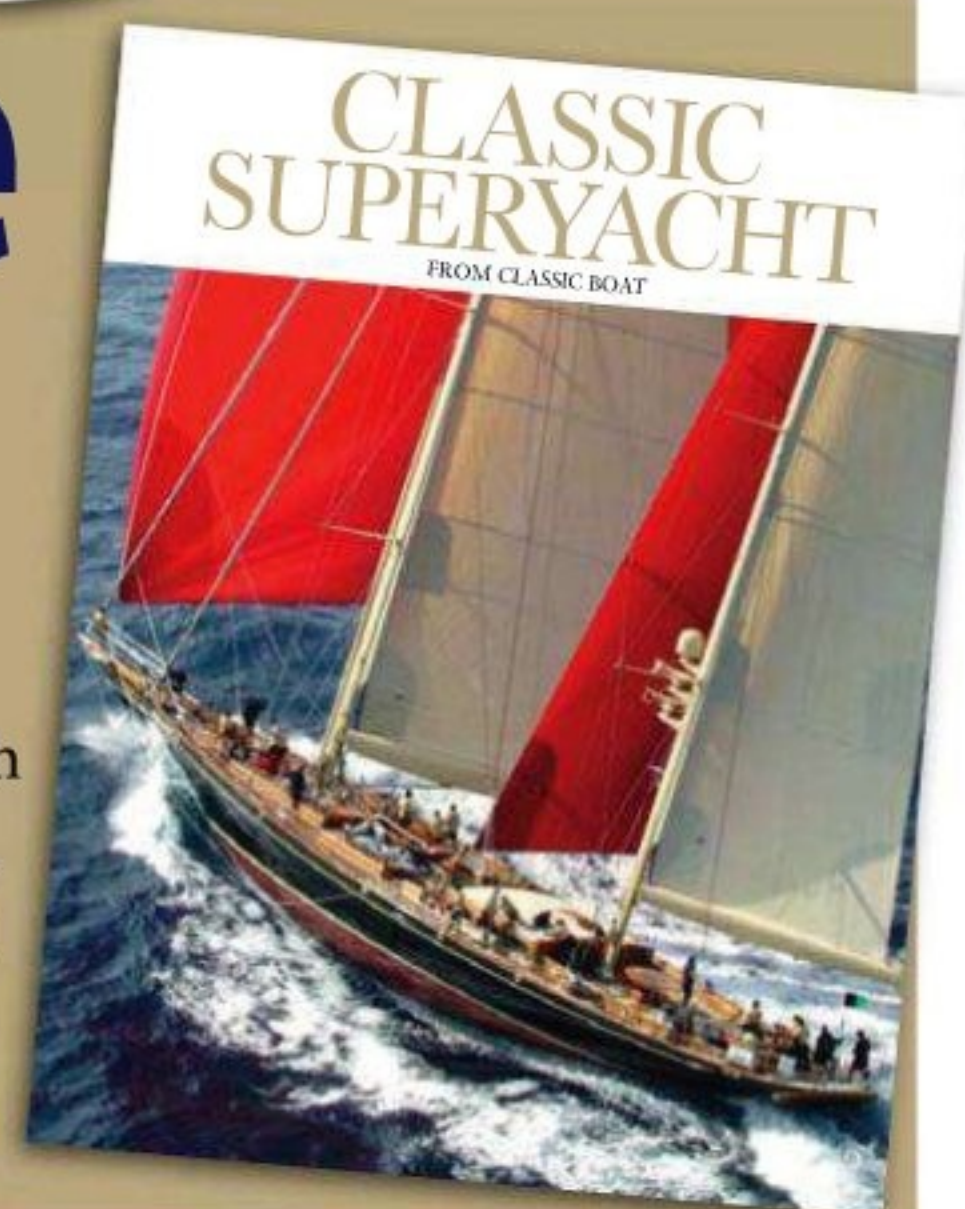
The 15-Metres epitomise classic racing. Now four are sailing and a new class has been formed.

Is your boat a Classic?

It's a question that keeps being asked on our forum... So we go back to basics to describe what makes a classic boat - and feature our top 25.

Plus **Free** CLASSIC SUPERYACHT

From Classic Boat a special extra: Classic Superyacht looks at the development of a new Big Class with features on the return of the J-Class, plus the grand yachts of history and some modern designs which are inspired by the lines of the classics.



COPENHAGEN

Danish autumn

The 1912 Max Oertz-designed 12-M yacht *Heti*, with all sails set, was one of a fleet of eight racing in 'Indian summer' weather in Copenhagen's historic harbour this September.

The race, organised by the Royal Danish Yacht Club, was won by the German 12-M *Sphinx*.



PETER SØGAARD

FRANCE

The cook, the feast; a Fife and her blogger

A weblog by Suzy Denning, crew and chef aboard the 95ft (29m) Wm Fife cutter *Mariquita*, has become a big hit online, with more than 8,000 followers, writes Ingrid Abery.

Suzy, 33, spends much of her time cooking for her crew at an angle of 33° in a temperature of 33°C to match. Among her posts are recipes for plum cake and sage and walnut pesto; a visit to the chestnut festival of La Garde Freinet, and varnishing *Mariquita's* 200 blocks. www.lifeat33degrees.blogspot.com



INGRID ABERY

BALTIC MASTER CUP

Leaky, broken yacht wins Baltic circuit

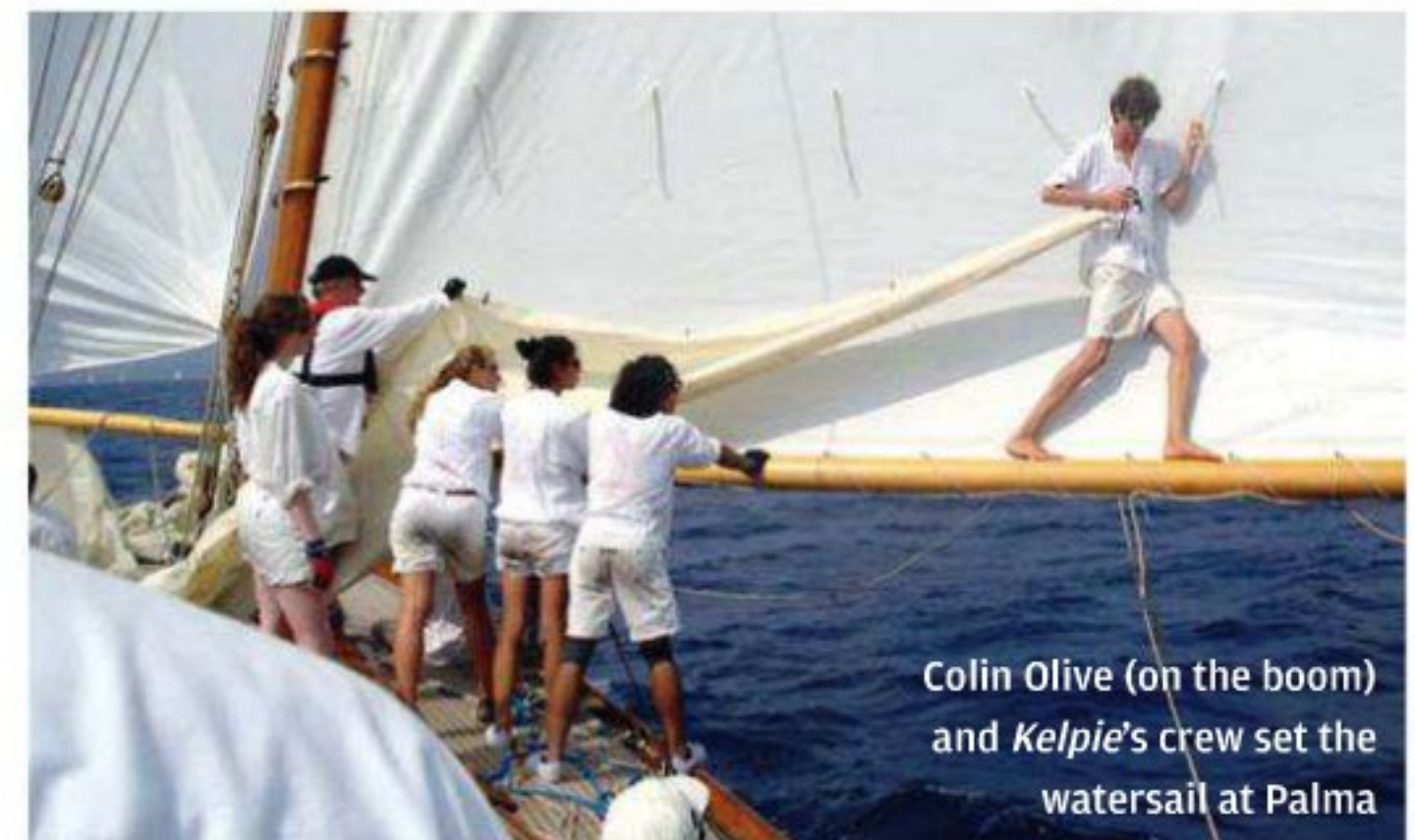
This year's Baltic Classic Circuit was won by an inferior, overloaded yacht with a stand-in crew, a leaking hull and a broken backstay. Not our words, but those of owner and skipper, the Russian Vadim Manuhkin who, after competing at the Arkösund Trosa Coastal Race and Royal Palace Regatta (Sweden), and the Pommern Regatta in Mariehamn, Finland, took this year's Baltic Master Cup.

His yacht *Nika*, an L6 one-design offshore cruiser from the Soviet era designed by A Kiselev in the late 50s, is one of about 20 such still sailing. Vadim explained: "Firstly, after the Baltic Sea Cup 2011 (which *Nika*

also won), part of our team could not go to Sweden. Secondly, the quality of the rig and hull is inferior to many competitors. This season *Nika* had a leak on the port tack, and on the last leg of the Royal Palace race the wire backstay was half broken. Thirdly, our gear for a long voyage heavily overloaded the boat."

Other prizes awarded throughout the Baltic series of eight regattas in Sweden and Finland included CB subscriptions and bottles of champagne from sponsor Nicolas Feuillatte.

Another L6, *Liliya*, was also very successful and won the Royal Palace Regatta this year.



Colin Olive (on the boom) and *Kelpie's* crew set the watersail at Palma

C/O PELHAM OLIVE

MED CIRCUIT

Kelpie's silver season

Kelpie, the 1903 Mylne cutter (CB279), was again in the silver in the Med this year, but all was not plain sailing, as British owner Pelham Olive told CB. Mishaps included a son overboard ("he seemed perfectly happy in the water") and an "unpleasant incident" at Mahon when a protest from competitors about *Kelpie's* handicap left her owing more time, after being classed as a 'racer-cruiser'. This was after Pelham asked for, and got, a stiffer penalty in 2010. Undaunted, she won her class.

En route from Calvi to Monaco, *Kelpie* sailed alongside a fin whale which dwarfed her 58ft (18m). After an exciting duel at Monaco, *Kelpie* lost by one point to the Sibbick cutter *Bona Fide* and came second in class. A mid-fleet result followed in Cannes, then finally a light-airs victory at St Tropez rounded off *Kelpie's* second winning season on the competitive, and increasingly professional, Med circuit. *Kelpie* will be available for charter for the 2012 season. Contact Pelham at olive@bhgroup.com or Mike Inglis at mikeyacht2000@yahoo.co.uk.



C/O SCANDINAVIAN CLASSIC YACHT TRUST

Nika, a Soviet L6, was one of ten competing for the overall cup, but hundreds of yachts competed in the circuit

SPECIAL REPORT: BOAT THERAPY ON THE NHS

Going to sea is good for you

BY STEFFAN MEYRIC HUGHES

We've known the sea is good for us for as long as we've been able to sail it. Just think of Ishmael, the first-person narrator of *Moby Dick*, whose opening statement is: "When I find myself growing grim about the mouth... when I feel like knocking hats off, I account it high time to get to sea as soon as I can."

Last year, the cure was formalised when Sea Sanctuary, a new charity based in Falmouth, Cornwall, bought *Leopard of Avon* (now *Leopard of Falmouth*), a 43ft (13.1m) Morgan Giles sloop built in 1959, as the focus for helping people with a wide range of mental health problems including anxiety, bipolar disorder (manic depression), schizophrenia, personality disorders and more.

This remedy is a concoction of the sounds of waves and of fluttering sails and the glow of an old, wooden boat. "It's been proved countless times that going to sea is good for you – the increase in serotonin, the endorphins caused by exercise – it's all there," said Joe Sabien, founder and director of Sea Sanctuary.

NATURAL ATMOSPHERE

"We wanted to use classic boats, as they provide a more natural, relaxing atmosphere than modern plastic, especially since many of our clients have spent time in white, artificial, clinical environments – a modern yacht would be too similar."

Clients spend four days on *Leopard*, going out for morning and afternoon sails and spending the nights on board in Falmouth. Four to five clients are joined by a skipper, a counsellor and a support counsellor.

Joe, 41, whose past includes a difficult childhood in care, a spell in the forces, work as a counsellor and time as a lifeboatman, was so convinced by the concept that he sank his life savings into it to get the ball rolling faster. Now, thankfully,



the charity has attracted enough funding to operate without Joe having to pay from his own pocket.

Since *Leopard of Falmouth*, Sea Sanctuary has bought two more boats: *Blue Waves*, a Buchanan-designed 25ft (8m) Wind Elf class sloop and, in July, *Syvoma*, a Lymington L-Class designed by Laurent Giles, a beautiful 23ft (7m) design of cabin sloop from 1933 and the forerunner to the more famous and slightly larger Vertue class sloop.

Both of these boats need work to get them to a seaworthy standard, but the restoration and maintenance of the boats is part of the treatment.



"taking the tiller is a metaphor for taking control of your life"

Joe Sabien

Looking for a bigger boat

One upshot of all this is that Sea Sanctuary is now looking for a bigger boat (60-80ft, 18-24m, in wood of course) to join its fleet. So if you know of any suitable candidates (in any state of repair), or would like to make a donation of the ordinary kind, call the Sea Sanctuary office on +44 (0)1326 378919 or visit www.sea-sanctuary.co.uk.

"In the same way that taking the tiller is a metaphor for taking control of your life again, looking after the boats is a reflection on looking after yourself – and you don't get that feeling of peeling back the old layers and putting new varnish on fresh wood with a plastic boat," said Joe.

MENTAL HEALTH

This is not the first time old wooden boats and the sea have been used to ease malaise of the soul: there are many organisations that have been reforming the lives of troubled youngsters, for instance, for years. It is, however, the first time the formula has been applied to people with mental health problems – and definitely the first time that such a scheme has been endorsed by the NHS, which is referring, and funding, the four-day recuperative stays.

Clients can also be referred by a GP or refer themselves and, increasingly, referrals are coming in from military psychiatrists sending veterans from war with combat stress.

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CHRISTIE'S

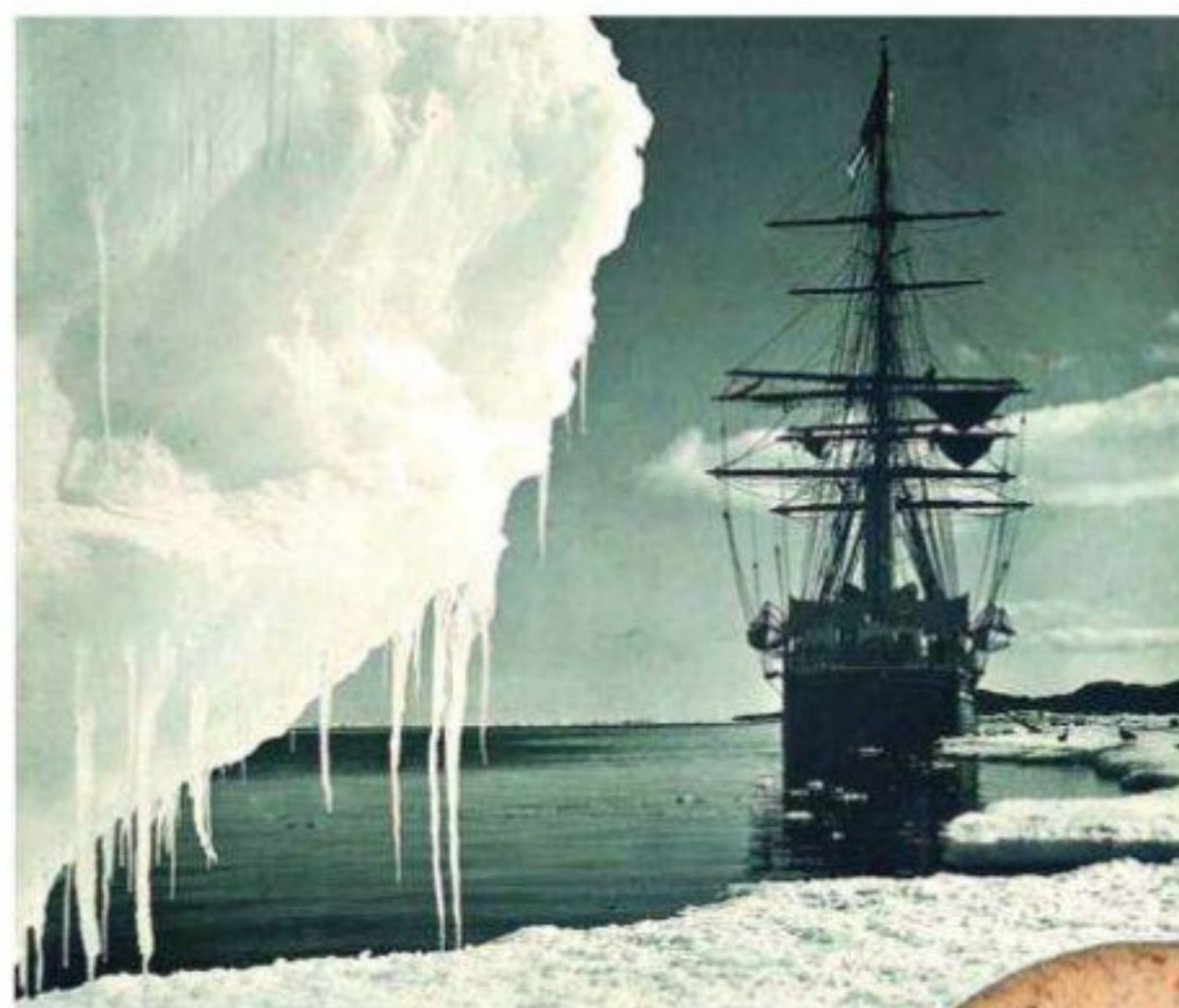
£1,250 takes the Antarctic biscuit

BY DAVE SELBY

The British Antarctic Expedition had failed to reach the South Pole, the men were starving and ill, yet party member Frank Wild was so moved by the generosity of expedition leader Ernest Shackleton he couldn't bring himself to eat the protein-rich biscuit pressed on him by the great man.

Underlining every word, Wild recorded in his journal on the last day of January 1909 that Shackleton "privately forced upon me his one breakfast biscuit, and would have given me another tonight had I allowed him. I do not suppose that anyone else in the world can thoroughly realise how much generosity and sympathy was shown by this; I DO by GOD. I shall never forget it."

The journal continues: "Thousands of pounds would not have bought that biscuit." That turned out to be uncannily prophetic as the 103-year-old Huntley &



Scott's *Terra Nova* by Herbert Ponting

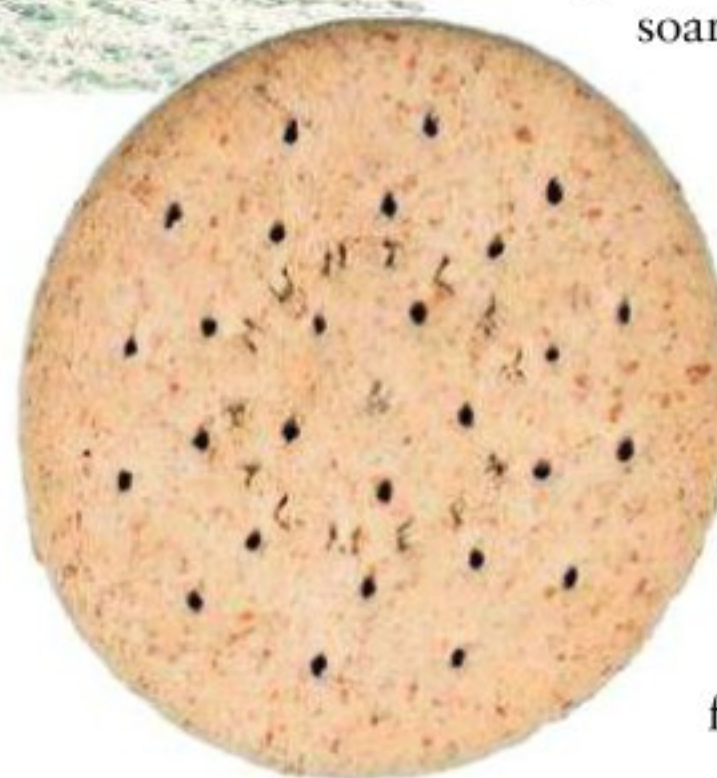
Palmer's biscuit sold for £1,250 in Christie's latest Travel, Science & Natural History auction. The highest price ever paid for a biscuit at auction is £7,638 for one from Shackleton's legendary *Endurance* expedition of 1914-16, which

culminated in his remarkable 1,800-mile voyage in an open boat.

Items of polar interest performed strongly in the Christie's auction. Robert Falcon Scott's 1910 pocket diary detailing his last months in England before setting off on the fateful *Terra Nova* expedition to the South Pole sold for £27,500, against expectations of just £6,000-10,000.

A large and dramatic 30x24in (73x61cm) photograph of expedition vessel *Terra Nova* at the ice edge taken by Herbert Ponting was expected to fetch £1,000-1,500, but soared to £8,750.

As ever, in times of economic uncertainty there's a drive into tangibles, with well-established fields of collecting backed by scholarship and research proving highly attractive. At £2 million gross this was Christie's highest total for a sale in this category.



MECUM

Objects of vice and virtue

It's made of glassfibre and has *Miami Vice* TV fame – but is it a classic?

Scott Ales, boat specialist at US auction-house Mecum, thinks so. "We believe there is a real growth opportunity in the collector boat hobby that includes specialty fiberglass boats in addition to wooden boats," he tells CB.

As it turned out, the 1986 Wellcraft 38ft (11.6m) *Scarab* from the hit TV series reached \$52,000

(£33,800) at the 70-boat auction at Geneva Lake, Wisconsin, USA in September, but failed to sell.

Top seller was a 1940 Chris-Craft 27ft (8.2m) triple racing runabout which sold for \$275,000 (£178,750). With a reputed top speed exceeding 50mph, *Miss Arrowhead*, restored in 2007, is the sole survivor of two built and its monster 845cid (13.8-litre) 375bhp Chris-Craft A-120-A racing engine is one of only three existing.



Vice failed to pay at Mecum, left, but Chris-Craft *Miss Arrowhead*, right, hit \$275,000

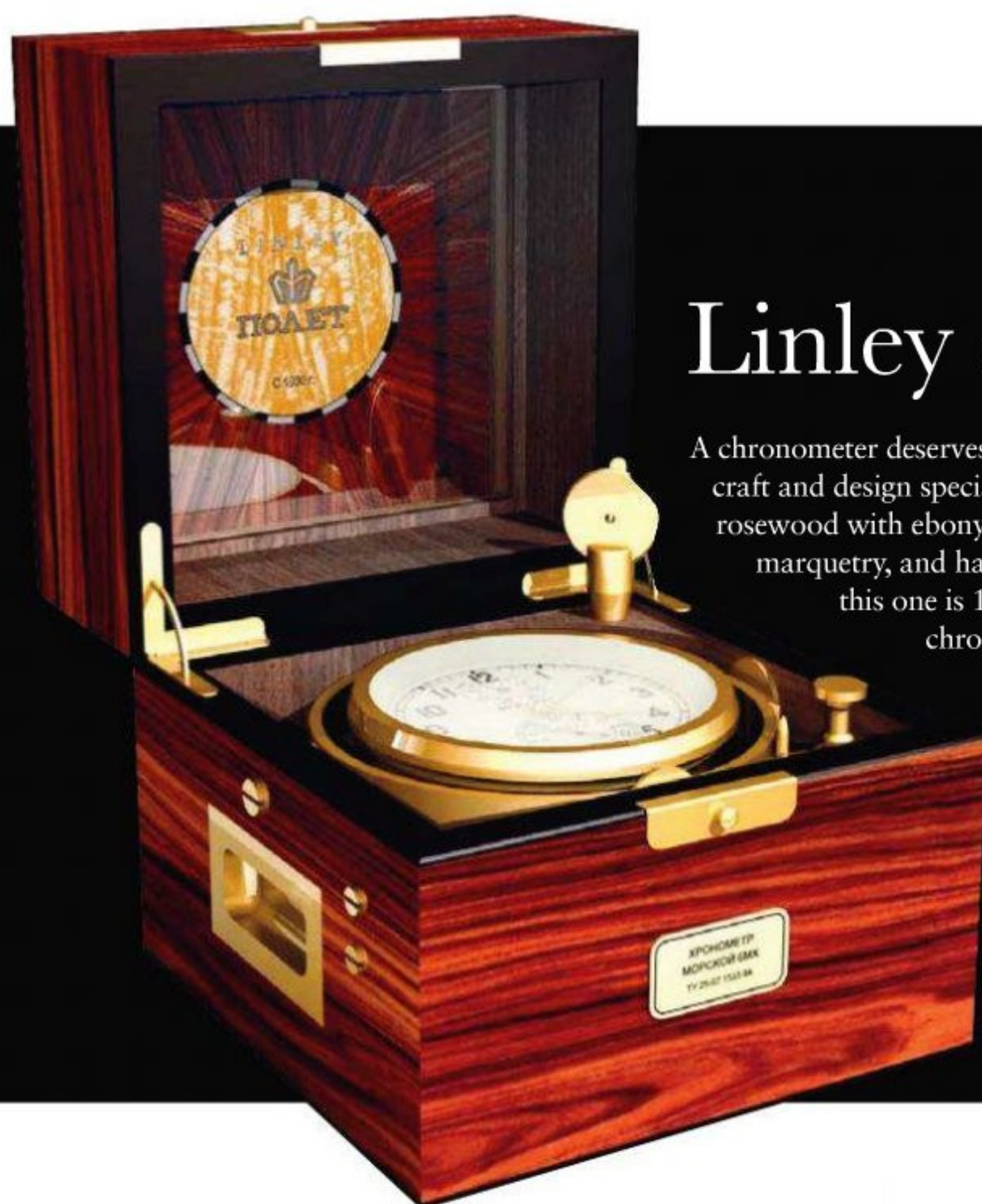
UPCOMING AUCTIONS...



CHRISTIE'S

Channel Island painters

'The flagship firing a salute' by noted maritime artist Peter Monamy (1681-1749), estimated at £25,000-35,000, is one of 70 works from 'a private Channel Island collection' coming up at Christie's next London marine painting sale on 24 November. Most of the works in collection either feature Channel Island subjects or are by artists associated with the islands, with estimates ranging from £300 to £35,000.



Linley chronometer box

A chronometer deserves special care and respect, and this chronometer box from craft and design specialists Linley provides exactly that. Made of Santos rosewood with ebony lippings, it is inlaid with satinwood and walnut marquetry, and has polished brass fittings. The boxes are bespoke items – this one is 190 x 190 x 185mm – and cost from £3,000 without the chronometer. Known for its high level of craftsmanship, applied to gifts, furnishings and yacht interiors, Linley has recently come under the wing of superyacht specialist Edmiston and is planning a new chapter of international expansion and development.

www.davidlinley.com



Riva-style ride-ons

For the next generation of motorboat captains, Thilo Neubauer from Homburg, Germany, has created a push-powered ride-on-boat for young children in the style of the classic wooden boats like Riva, Chris Craft or Boesch, and made of the same fine materials.

Just like the originals, every Woody-Cart can be customised to meet the owner's wishes, with choice of seat material, handle (chrome is an option) and an individual boat name in lettering of choice. Even cleats are on offer. The size is suitable for children up to four years old, and prices are according to customer's specification.

www.woody-cart.de

Wood-burning stoves

Wood or charcoal-burning stoves like these are something many a yachtsman dreams of this time of year. These, from Navigator Stove Works in Washington State, USA, have their roots in the old Lunenburg Foundry of Nova Scotia, est 1891. Every stove, still to the old designs, is hand-built by Navigator's owner Andrew Moore – so order completion is variable – in cast iron with an enamel finish. The smallest, the Sardine, measures about 1ft³ but produces 2-5 kW (7,500-18,000 BTU), enough to heat most yacht cabins. It has been rated as 86 per cent efficient, non-catalytic and clean-burning – quite something for a century-old design. The Little Cod is a little larger, at 13x18x14in (33x46x36cm), and warmer. The Sardine costs \$1,090, though costs depend on finish.

www.marinestove.com





Michael Kahn photography

Michael Kahn's work is a celebration of traditional photography skills and a complete understanding of his subject. He works in black and white film, later producing his luminous silver gelatin photographs in his dark room, playing with tint, light and warmth. Many of his photographs exhibit an unusual calmness, concentrating on composition, shape and form rather than the brash colours and frozen dramatics of other marine photographers, and creating a sense of timelessness. Shown is *The Lady Anne*, which at 14x14in (36x36cm), matted to 24x20in (61x51cm), costs \$1,400. Larger sizes are available.

www.michaelkahn.com

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VICTORY in the south

Taking the 1882 Falmouth workboat *Victory* to the southern regattas was a first – she'd only ever been as far as Fowey. *Dan Houston* joins her in Saint-Tropez. Photos by *Emily Harris*



Previous pages:
Victory with
Halloween and
Skylark at
Saint-Tropez

Left: Victory at
Saint-Tropez. The
furthest she had
been before this,
since 1883, was
Fowey – 24nM



Left: David Carne
sails Victory on the
Thursday at
Saint-Tropez
Left below:
Concentrating on
the helm with
Partridge and
Marigold behind



ALL PHOTOGRAPHS BY EMILY HARRIS

There's a mobile ringing and Tim Vinnicombe, who normally runs the Falmouth oyster workboat *Boy Willie* is answering it and explaining that while, yes, the oyster season does start on Saturday, well no he can't supply oysters next week... "Well the boat's still in her racing rig... from the summer... Can't really..." He does not let on to the celebrity TV chef on the other end of the line that he's in Saint-Tropez, racing on another Falmouth workboat, but it brings home how unusual it is to see one of these famous boats here.

The vernacular Falmouth workboats are the only craft to be still fishing under sail, as a recognised fishery, in the developed world. They don't have engines and they can still be seen, under short rig, in all weathers criss-crossing one of the oyster banks in the Fal estuary, during the winter months; the season starts on 1 October.

The 26ft 6in (8m) *Victory*, built in 1883 by Hitchens at Pill Creek as the *Royal Oak*, was made famous in her home waters by Toby West, Falmouth fisherman and lifeboat coxswain who died in 2002. Toby's exploits were legendary (CB150) but among the many well-known people he took sailing was the Olympic gold medallist and then local MP, Sebastian Coe, now Lord Coe in charge of the London Olympics. Toby had famously promoted him before his knighthood, referring to him as 'Sir Bastion'.



She is now run, still in her jaunty yellow colours, by Toby's nephew David Carne. "It's spelt like the old Cornish name, not like the Aga," he jokes in his broad Cornish accent. David races *Victory* – she is not used for oyster dredging any more – and he's brought her here with some friends and son Ben. And she's very much the toast of the fleet. As the large yachts come by, before and after racing, the crews line up and give the old cutter a round of applause. It's usually followed by: "Quel type de bateau?" "Bateau de peche!" rejoin the lads.

They don't get many like that down here, and it's a tribute to the organisers at this event, now in its 30th year, that they celebrate a wide range of classic boat types and design. The Nioulargue, as it was known after its initial couple of years as the Club Cinquante Cinq Cup, established a different kind of sailing experience.

SCHOONER TO SUNBEAM

It always has a mix of boats, from the grand schooners like *Mariette* or *Elena*, to the elegant large cutters like *Moonbeam* or *Mariquita* and then down through the sizes to the smallest boats in the fleet, like the 26ft (8m) *Dainty* the first Solent Sunbeam, built in 1923, brought here from Bosham by truck regularly since 2004 (CB268). Owners Peter Nicholson and Mike Hollis keep getting re-invited. It's interesting that *Dainty* was first

racing among the Big Class at Cowes weeks with the likes of *Lulworth* in 1924 and *Cambria* – at 111ft (33.8m) one of the largest bermudan cutters here this year – in 1928. She's completely dwarfed by *Cambria*, of course, but that's the whole point of the spectacle; there's no better place to understand the range and development of classic sailing craft design – before it all got ugly with moulded plastic – than regattas like Saint-Tropez.

I get invited to sail on *Victory* on the first day of racing and there's so little wind that the start gets delayed until 1pm. I get introduced to her crew and Butch Dalrymple, of the Classic Works yard in La Ciotat, who is our tactician. While we jill around looking at the other boats David Spargo, *Victory*'s sailmaker goes over the side to scrub her off at the waterline. "We call that a Cornish lift-out," I get told.

Despite the light airs, which find some boats wallowing around with their dolphin strikers dipping up and down into their own bow-wave I notice that *Victory* is actually moving through the fleet. Her jaunty blue and yellow jackyard topsail can catch the slightest of airs and she manages to get going in a way that makes some people stare at her stern for the tell-tale signs of prop wash or exhaust. And when eventually the starting sequence for the various classes begins we also get a good start, crossing the line a few seconds after the gun.

Above: the glorious *Cambria* sweeps along

“I think we’ll ease... I’ll take every lift I get... Hold the boom out, Basher”



Top: *White Wings*, *Tuiga* and *Mariquita* round a mark in a few zephyrs of air.

Above left: Waiting for wind with the old harbour in the background.

Above middle: *Sunshine* and the Hotel Sube. **Above right:** *Sunshine* running with her setting boom goose-winged out

Dave has turned his hat round and concentrates on helming, guiding the boat through every nuance of pressure. There is a quiet rapport with Dalrymple and the crew: “I think we’ll ease... I’m gonna take every lift I get... Hold the boom out, Basher...” We manage, incredibly, to stay ahead of both *Partridge* and *Marigold* – much larger cutters and when the Big Class come by Carne keeps well clear to avoid their bad air.

“Oh look, Bruno Troublé just got gassed,” Dalrymple says, pointing out the famous French yachtsman to windward, sailing the newly-restored (at Chantier Guip) 35ft (10.7m) 1918 Danish yawl *Runa IV*. And it’s true, Troublé’s in trouble as the double-ender just stops in bad air... She is overtaken by several yachts, making it worse, before she gets going again.

THE YEAR FOR YAWLS

This year will be the year for yawls though, in Saint-Tropez, especially the five S&S designs by Olin Stephens (see p19). The newly restored *Skylark* is being helmed by Tara Getty, while Griff Rhys Jones has brought *Argyll*. There are also *Stormy Weather*, *Cometa* and *Manitou* once helmed by President John Kennedy. All five will get together on the Thursday for a photo shoot before *Argyll* and *Skylark* go off to vie for the new Bluebird Trophy which Tara donates this year.

At the weather mark Carne shows how well he knows the old *Victory* and what she’ll do. “Look at them bunching, I am staying well clear, we’ll just ease below them my handsome,” he says. We come a few boat lengths downwind of the mark and then, in clean air, sail around the yachts bunching at the mark. It’s a nice little feat of seamanship and there’s a certain amount of consternation among other yachts in our class as the doughty cutter breaks open her spinnaker, found at a jumble sale by Ben, which matches her stripy topsail. *Victory* is well set up for racing, with jiggers and hardeners and barber hauls but she’s also very basic. A crate for sandwiches and water, under the counter by Carne’s feet, is called The Kitchen.

More wind sets us back in the fleet but even so we cross the line seconds behind *Partridge* and ahead of the likes of *Oriole* the 43ft 6in (13.25m) NY30 with which we close raced for an hour or more. We sail in to ask for a tow: “Let’s just get closer to the beer tent before we douse that jib,” says Carne. *Victory* will go on to win second in her class after *Kelpie* which is an astonishing achievement given her age and scratch rig.

This year *Avel* won the Rolex Trophy out of the record 115 classics enrolled at Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez... but it’s the humble workboat *Victory* it seems who won her own gauntlet against such great odds.

St Patrick

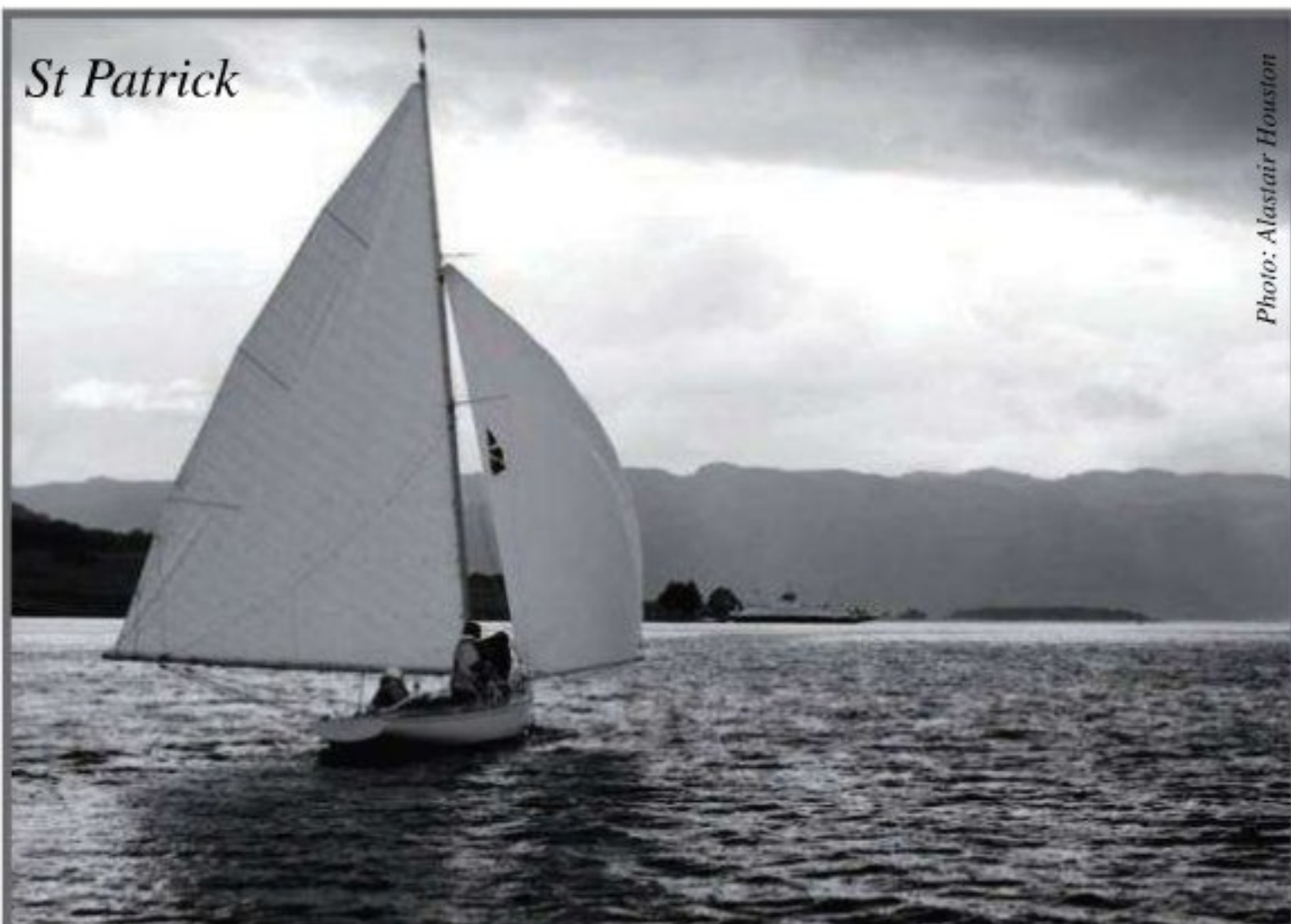


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The rewards of getting afloat



THE ROYAL
SOCIETY
OF MARINE
ARTISTS

Peter Smith reports back from the RSMA's annual exhibition

This year's Classic Boat Award has been presented to David Howell PRSMA for his delightful oil painting 'Heading for the next job'. It depicts a pilot cutter head to windward in unsettled sky and sea. I naturally asked David which pilot cutter it was. "No one in particular, it's a made up one," was his reply. In fact it is based on many sketches and reflects his fascination with pilot cutters. It's a move away from his usual low-water landscapes and a return to the days when he would make drawings while offshore racing.

I wonder then if marine artists should take to the water more often. Artists like Geoff Hunt, Rowena Wright, Jenny Morgan, Roger Davies, all paint yachts

and boats out on the water. But too many paintings are based from the shore, so the exhibition has a lot of low-water and harbour views. Beautiful as these are, I would like to see more onboard and out-at-sea studies that bring the experiences of sailors to a land-based audience who clearly have an appetite for marine paintings.

Last year's winner Roger Davies showed three classic yachts, *Tuiga*, *Hispania* and *The Lady Anne*, racing off Cowes. Here painting recreates an event that early photographs may have missed, but it also places the viewer out on the water for a sight a land-based audience would not see. 🌐



PHOTOGRAPHS OF PAINTINGS BY MERVYN MAGGS

CLASSIC BOAT AWARD WINNER

DAVID HOWELL

HEADING FOR THE NEXT JOB

OIL, £4,250



ROGER DAVIES
TUIGA, HISPANIA AND THE LADY ANNE
 OIL, £45,000



ROWENA WRIGHT
THE LADY ANNE
 OIL, £900

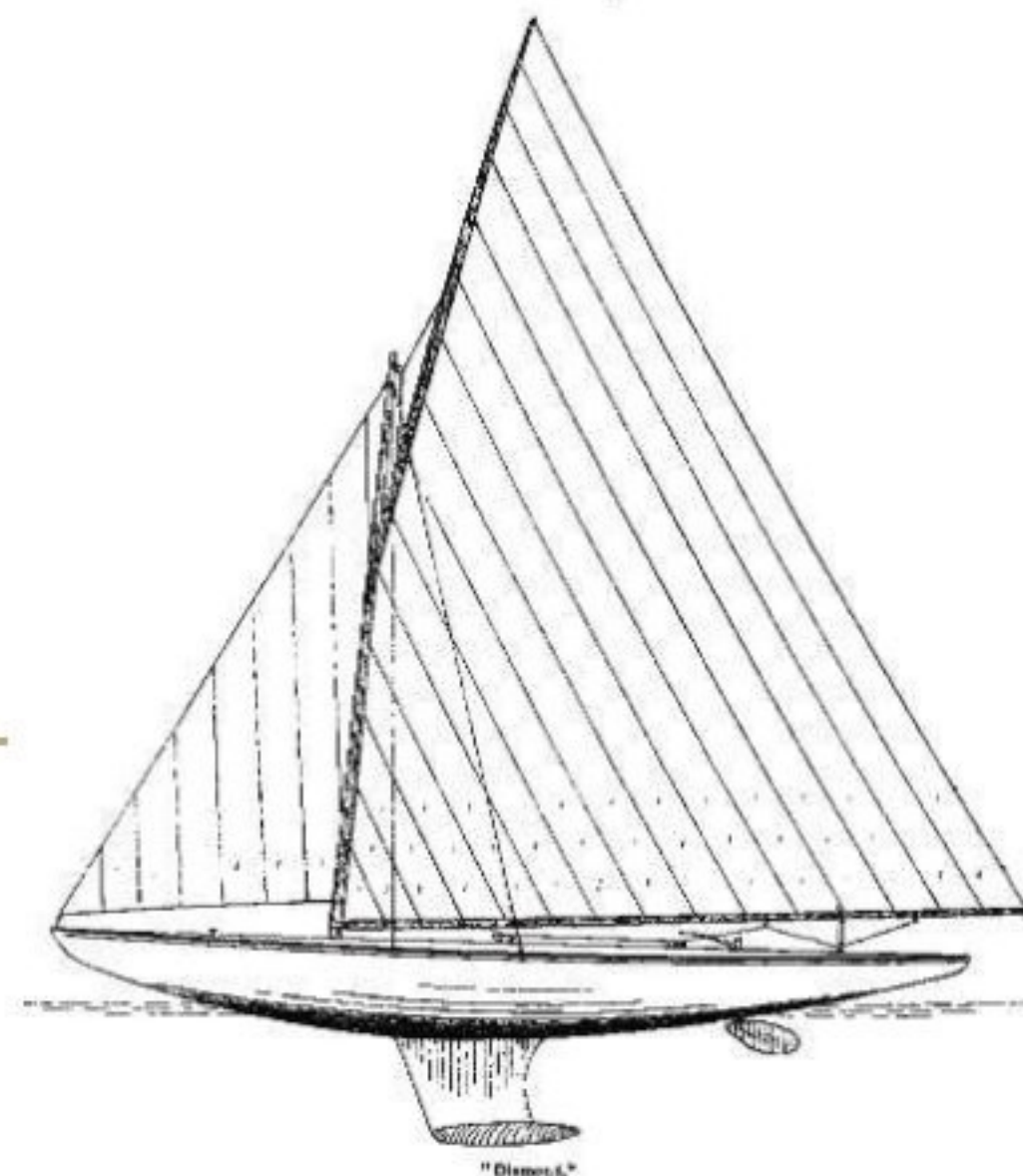


PATRICK DONOVAN
WHITSTABLE SCHOONER MARY ANNE
 WATERCOLOUR, £700



ROGER DELLAR
MALDON BOAT YARD
 OIL, £1,500

MY SIBBICK OBSESSION



It started when *Martin Nott* bought a restoration project by once-famous designer-builder Charles Sibbick. Then he built a Sibbick Half-Rater...

I admit it... I am slightly obsessed by a little-known boat designer and builder.

CB readers may well know the name Charles Sibbick. Several of his boats have been featured in these pages, most recently the fabulous 48ft (14.6m) yawl *Saunterer* (CB 277), but unlike Fife, Watson, Herreshoff or Nicholson his name is unfamiliar to the average yachtsman.

One hundred years ago nothing could have been further from the truth. Following his death in January 1912 one commentator reported:

"Few men were better known in the yachting world than the late Mr Charles Sibbick. He attained considerable fame as a designer and builder of small racing yachts, his wonderful raters being remarkably successful at English and Continental regattas. He was indisputably the premier designer of the type of racing yacht which made the name of Sibbick famous throughout the yachting world."

LOOKING FOR A PROJECT

My obsession happened by accident. We had a motor boat, one of those fast white ones, but we were using it less and less, so we decided to sell it and I began looking for a project instead. I came across an ad in CB for a yacht called *Witch*. She had been moored in Yarmouth Harbour for over 30 years, and it sounds crazy, but the name connected with me. The owner Colin Marsh agreed to sell her. It's all his fault really!

I knew that *Witch* had been built in Cowes in 1902 by Charles Sibbick but couldn't find anything about him or his yard, so I started years of on-off research. Going through Lloyd's Registers, old magazines and books I started to find out more and more, and of course the

more you find, the more interesting it gets. There are some fantastic Sibbick boats still sailing around the world, but out of nearly 300 yachts built, there are fewer than 20 still known to exist.

One of the first magazine articles I found was by John Leather, also in CB (CB30, December 1990). Entitled 'Charles Sibbick and the raters', it is a detailed and fascinating account of fin-keel racing yachts and the people who sailed them. These were lightweight racing boats, designed to last a few years, and a large number were exported all round the world, so basically they don't now exist. The closest is *Bona Fide*, racing in the Panerai Classic regattas in the Mediterranean. There may still be others out there, but I haven't found them yet.

Having taken delivery of *Witch*, and being the proud owner of a classic yacht, I quickly realised that I knew very little about traditional wooden boats or how they were constructed. So I enrolled on a one-week boat restoration course at the Boat Building Academy in Lyme Regis. After the week I knew enough to do some of the basic things to *Witch*. I enjoyed the course and made a note to maybe return for a longer course at some point.

Fast forward to 2010. I had spent 30 years working on motor racing magazines, latterly as publisher of *Motor Sport*, but I was more interested in old boats. I didn't want to retire at 60-something and stop, so boatbuilding seemed like a good thing to be doing. I enrolled on a nine-month course at the BBA, which gives you an opportunity to build a boat. What better than a Sibbick Half-Rater? It would be an interesting experiment and give me something to demonstrate my skills.

One of the books I had come across during my research was Henry Coleman Folkard's *Sailing Boats from Around the World*, published in 1906 but available





JAKE SUGDEN

Above: Under sail, she's 'very predictable, not at all like a dinghy'

as a reprint from Dover Publications. In this book, Folkard describes the original *Diamond*, designed and built by Charles Sibbick in Cowes in 1897, and there's a small pen-and-ink illustration.

"*Diamond* has a fin-bulb-keel of the 'Sibbick type', and is a beautiful and powerful looking boat. She was exhibited, fully-rigged with her sails set, at the International Yachting Exhibition at the Imperial Institute, Kensington, London, in the summer of 1897, where she was an object of considerable attraction, and afterwards sold and taken to the Mediterranean and then to Russia.

"The *Diamond* is decked all over excepting the well or cockpit. She is broad and full amidships with fiddle-pattern bow, clean run aft, and has a full, flat rounded bottom. Her fin-plate is of steel, to which the lead bulbs are bolted, one half on each side at the bottom of the plate, and extend aft beyond the plate. The rudder is of oblong shape, large and deep. And of the same metal as the fin-plate.

"She is rigged with two sails only, mainsail and foresail, the latter all inboard but the main extends about a foot beyond the stern. The mainsail is of the Solent rig,

very pointed and nearly triangular, has a long yard, the peak standing high above the mast and nearly in line with it. The mast is by no means tall, and the foresail-hoist is therefore not so high as in some boats of the same rating. The forestay is of steel wire-rope of slender proportions; the foresail being attached to it by six small marine silver snatch-hooks, so that on being let down, it can be taken off and shifted for a smaller or larger one in a few seconds without casting off the stay. There are also two small wire shrouds either side of the mast. The main boom is attached to the mast by a goose-neck in the usual way, and the same marine silver hoop-band, which receives the spike of a goose-neck, has a shoulder and socket in which to receive the spike of a goose-neck in front of the mast for a boom to spread the spinnaker when required.

"The mainsail is laced to the boom as well as to the yard, the tack being held down by a brass shackle. From tack to peak the mainsail measures nearly about the same in height as the length over all of the boat itself: the main-sheet is rove through three blocks on the boom and one on the hawse; the hawse is of brass about sixteen or

“The boat and rigging being in all respects of the most complete and modern style”

DIAMOND

DESIGNED

Charles Sibbick

LOA

20ft 10in (6.35m)

LWL

13ft 5in (4.1m)

BEAM

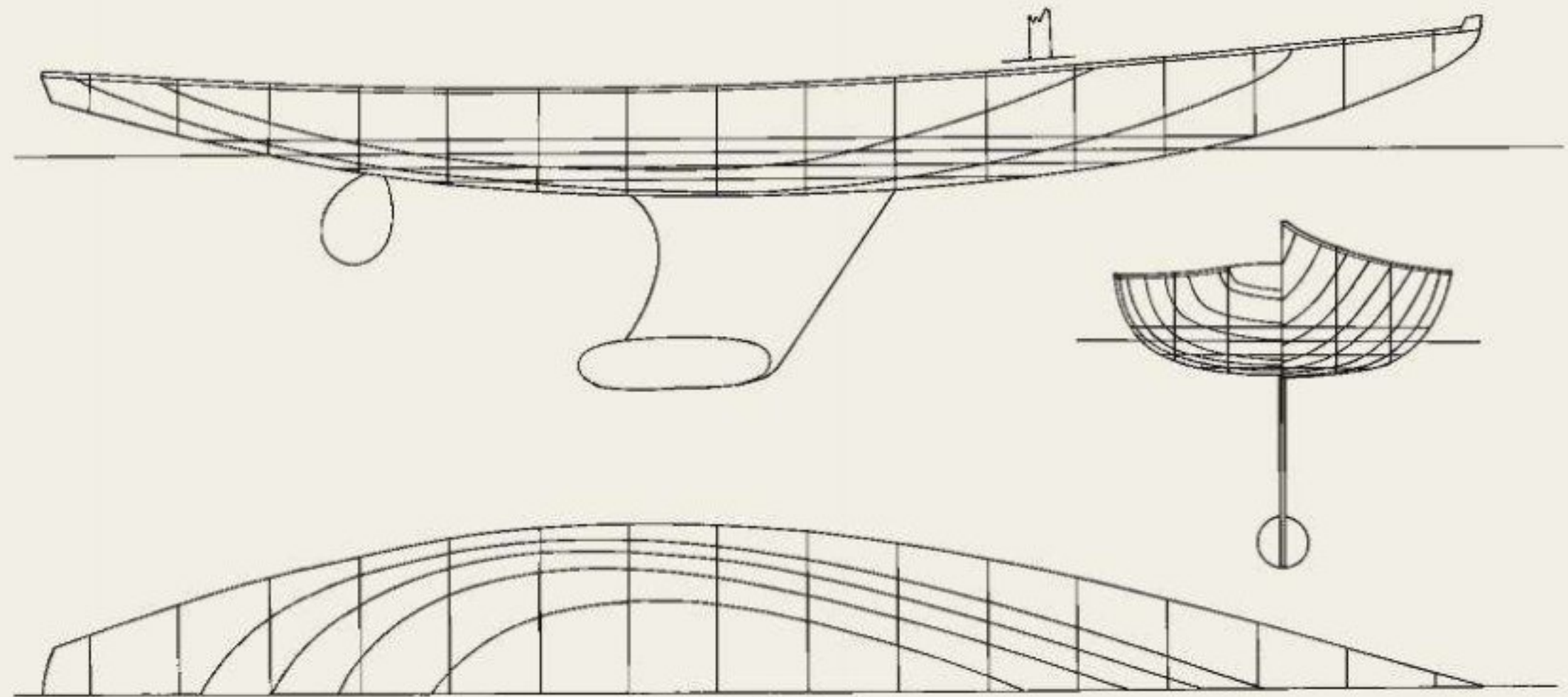
4ft 11in (1.5m)

DRAUGHT

3ft 3in (1m)

SAIL AREA

190 sqft 17.65sqm)



eighteen inches in length, secured to the deck at about six feet from the outer end of the stern. The falls of the halliards are rove through brass leader-pipes in the deck, and are made fast to marine silver cleats inside the cockpit; and so also the fore and main-sheets; there are no outside cleats, all are inside the cockpit; so that there is no necessity for any one of the crew to go on deck, and so put the boat out of trim when sailing a match: halliards and sheets can be readily hauled taut, eased and slackened by the hands in the cockpit without putting a foot on deck.

“The boat and rigging being in all respects of the most complete and modern style.”

BEKEN ARCHIVE

So we had a pretty good first-hand description as well as the illustration. Beken of Cowes found a photograph in their archive of a very similar Sibbick boat, *Mirette*, 1896, which we used in building *Diamond*.

The lofting was done full size using a combination of plans, offsets and dimensions (including sail area and ballast weight) for a Half-Rater published in 1895 and lines for a Sibbick One-Rater published in one of Uffa

Above from left to right: Forestay fitting, bronze tiller by Maritime Enterprises of Yarmouth, gooseneck

*Right: This Beken photo of *Mirette* provided guidance*



BEKEN OF COWES

“The fin and bulb keel make her very predictable, not at all like a dinghy”



MARTIN NOTT AND HANNAH JENKINS

Top row, left to right: Strip planking, glassing the hull and vacuum resin infusion

Bottom row, left to right: Dovetail joint, samson post and deck beams

Fox's books. The sail plan came from a copy of Dixon Kemp's *A Manual of Yacht and Boat Sailing*; it is published as being for a 2½-Rater with a comment that a Half-Rater would use the same shape, scaled down to suit, in this case to a total of 190sqft (17.6m²).

MISS WINIFRED

We were also very lucky to be able to look over *Miss Winifred*, a similar Half-Rater built by Tino Rawnsley about 12 years ago and owned by Rees Martin. *Miss Winifred* is a replica of the 1892 Herreshoff *Wee Winn* raced by Miss Winifred Sutton (CB 142). This allowed us to confirm that the plank and hog dimensions were up to the job. In fact, the plank and deck thicknesses and all other scantlings and materials are as close as we could get to the original boat. We also took a large number of photographs that were extremely helpful all through our build.

The new *Diamond* is built in red cedar strip plank with yellow cedar deck and mahogany coamings. The fittings are largely bronze, many of them custom made by Classic Marine of Woodbridge and Maritime Enterprises in Yarmouth, and she has traditional cream coloured sails by Elvstrøm.

Diamond was built in just five months, and although she was built using modern techniques she looks very much like a classic yacht, but without the hard work of looking after a wooden boat.

She sails very well. The fin and bulb keel makes her very predictable, not at all like a dinghy, and she is easy to handle. The rudder looks small and unusually shaped to the modern eye, but she responds perfectly to each movement. She has handled rough weather well, the high angle at the bow pushing the water up and away so that although the deck was wet there was no suggestion at all of us getting wet inside the cockpit. There are buoyancy tanks built in fore and aft should anything ever happen.

The sheets and halyards come into the cockpit as described by Folkard, so she is easy from that point of view as well. The aft shrouds on each side act as runners with a block and a line going back to a cleat, but they are easily tightened and released during tacking.

Diamond lives on a trailer and can be rigged in a few hours. The hollow Sitka spruce mast is short and light so can easily be stepped by one person, the shrouds are Dyneema and are attached to the mast simply by strops around the shoulder; they are coiled up and put away with the blocks and rigging screws at the end of the day.

Having built, sailed and raced *Diamond*, I have now put her up for sale. I would love to build another, or a bigger rater. A One-Rater would be around 27ft (8.2m) long with a beam of 6ft 6in (2m), a Five-Rater would be more than 40ft (12.2m) long with a sail area of 1,000sqft (93m²). I have the plans for a Sibbick 36ft Linear Rater which is 52ft (15.9m) on deck, and that would be truly spectacular.

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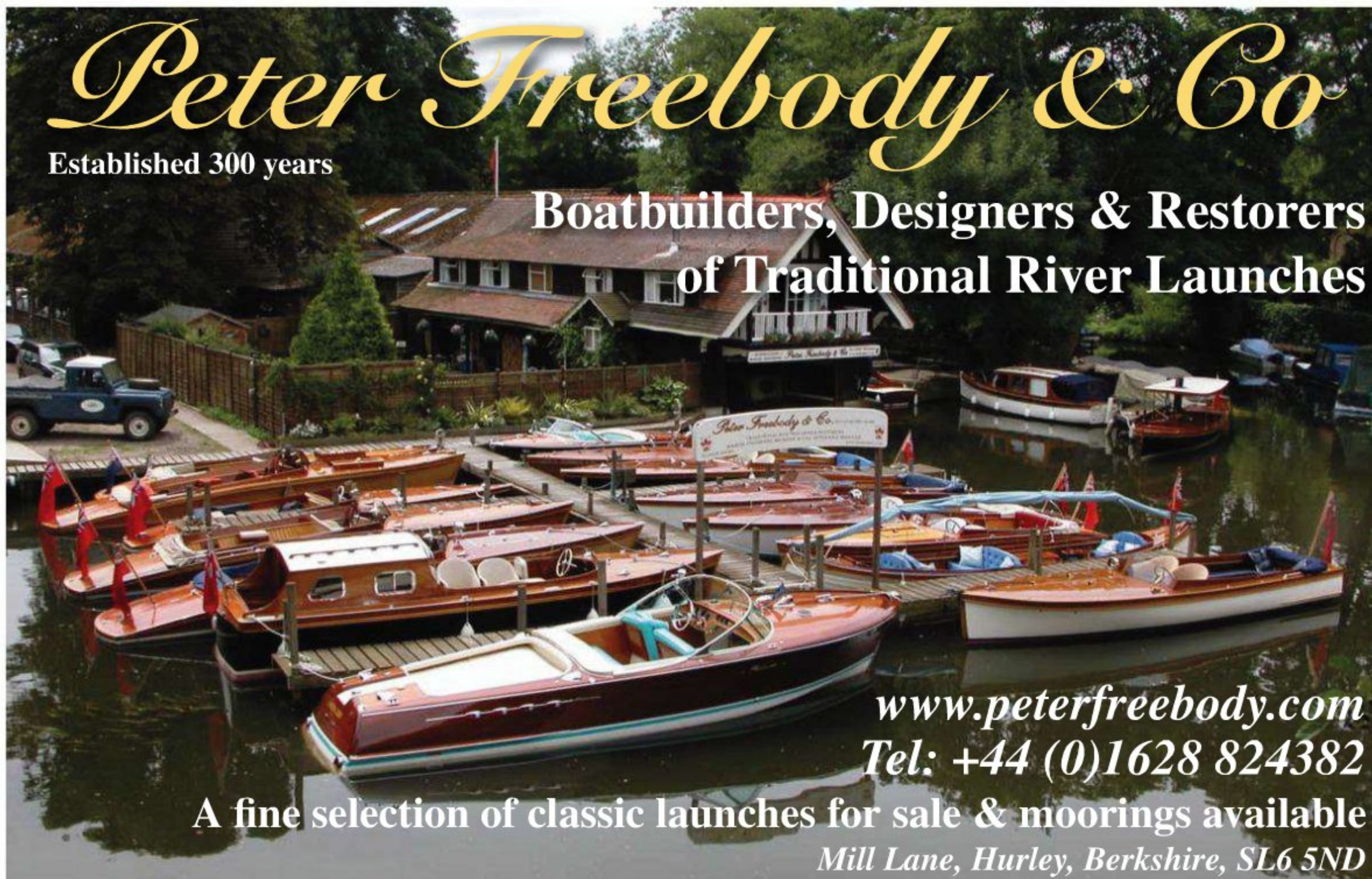
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CHARLES SIBBICK Highly rated



In the 1890s his rater yachts were race winners and much sought after. Then the rules changed and he moved into building cruising yachts

The name of Charles Sibbick was intimately associated with the late 19th-century rater yachts – those fast, lightly-built racing craft constructed to the Yacht Racing Association's rating rule of 1886. Devised by Dixon Kemp, it was a simple combination of length and sail area, in the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Waterline length} \times \text{sail area}}{6000} = \text{Rating as a number}$$

There were Half-Raters, One-Raters, Two-and-a-Half, Five and 10 Raters, plus a few 20s and 40s, and Sibbick's raters had a reputation for being winners.

Born in Cowes in 1849, Sibbick initially worked as a house builder and painter, but in 1888 he turned to yacht building and design. His first boat was a small cruiser called *Trixie*, designed by GF Flemmich who subsequently, in 1892, brought Sibbick his One-Rater *Mahatma* to build. *Mahatma*'s success encouraged Sibbick to design his own, starting with *Kitten*, launched later in the same year. The light-displacement, easily driven hull forms led him to develop the deep fin-and-bulb keels. In 1893 his *Tartar*, another One-Rater, made his name, and by 1895 his Albert Yard had up to 50 boats racing in the crack YRA classes – that year saw 30 of his boats share 550 prizes between them. The most

successful was *Norman*, a Five-Rater built for Capt J Orr Ewing over the 1894-95 winter. She was 44ft (13.4m) overall, 33ft (10.1m) at the waterline, and 11ft (3.4m) in beam. In that year, she won 51 first prizes, out of 56 races started, and attracted the attention and admiration of the great German designer Max Oertz.

Not only were Sibbick's boats fast, so was his boatbuilding. Many owners had a new boat each season, some two or even three. In 1896, Prince George, later King George V, but then a serving naval officer with a spell of leave between ships, asked Sibbick to build him a One-Rater within a week. The normal time was six weeks, but by having teams working round the clock, the *White Rose* was in the water five days after her lines had been struck, and two days later she won her first race.

OVERSEAS CUSTOMERS

In his heyday Sibbick built many boats for overseas customers, as well as selling designs for local building. But rule changes led eventually to the demise of the 'skimming dish' and Sibbick turned his hand to the more stable, less frenetic market for cruising yachts.

The 30-ton yawl *Armored* was launched in 1898, and the following year he built the 8-ton *Wilful*, 30ft (9.1m), for the famous circumnavigator George Mulhauser. *Wilful* was later owned by Maurice Griffiths, who described her as "the finest small cruiser, I believe, of her tonnage to be found anywhere. She was built by Sibbick of Cowes when he was at the height of his fame and was so well built and cared for that at the age of 30 summers she looked as good as new."

Saunterer, 16 tons (and, recently restored, featured in CB277), was built in 1900, and *Ruth*, the largest yacht built at the Albert Yard, a yawl of 63 tons, 66ft (20.2m) long with a sail area of 3,800sqft, was launched in 1902, the same year as Martin Nott's (see p36) own 32ft (9.8m) Sibbick gaff cutter *Witch*, currently under restoration.

Albert yard on the west bank of the River Medina at Cowes around 1903





SIBBICK YACHTS STILL WITH US TODAY

Bona Fide

1899, 45ft (13.7m); restored by Argentario, Italy, in 2003 www.cantierenavaledellargentario.com

Giga

1899, 36ft (9.8m) sloop, ex *Betty IV*, based in Denmark

Leda

Not definitely by Sibbick but probably 1894/6 One-Rater, based on Lake Balaton, Hungary

Merrymaid

1906, 24ft (7.3m) LWL Linear Rater being restored on the Thames.

Navala

1905 fin keel Godinet rater, under restoration in Spain.

Restful

1898 clinker dinghy, larch on oak, based in Berkshire.

Ripple

1902, 24ft (7.3m) gaff cutter, small cabin, no engine, boat, based in Dartmouth.

Riva

1898, 38ft (11.6m) cutter, based Dartmouth, currently for sale, see *Getting Afloat*, p74.

Orford Whitewings

23ft gaff-rigged class designed by Sibbick in 1899; *Quinque*, 1909, built by Eversons of Woodbridge, is restored and based in Essex. *Nona* (No 9, seen here with No 8, *Kelpie*) and *Alf-a-Mo*, both 1899, await restoration at Aldeburgh

Saunterer

1900, 48ft (14.6m) yawl, restored 2011 (CB277), based in Dartmouth. www.saunterer.co.uk

Thalassa

1903/6, 48ft (14.6m) yawl, based in Portsmouth (CB219). www.thalassa06.co.uk

Whimbrel

1899, 52ft (15.9m) cutter, still sailing in Denmark.

Wilful

1899, 30ft (9.1m), St Malo.

Witch

1902, 36ft (11m) gaff cutter www.witch1902.co.uk



Saunterer, 1900, newly restored, featured in our July issue this summer

Nott lists of some 15 Sibbick yachts still sailing or under restoration. They include *Bona Fide* – the star of the Sibbick fleet and the only pure racing yacht still sailing. Built in 1899 for the Paris Olympics, 45ft (13.7m) long, she was restored by the Argentario Yard in Italy in 2003 and is regularly raced in the Med. There is also *Thalassa*, a 48ft (14.6m) yawl, very similar to *Saunterer* and largely original, begun in 1903 by Sibbick, but completed in 1906 by J&G Fay of Southampton as Sibbick's own yard was in financial difficulties. She was featured in CB219. Another 13 yachts that were around in the 1960s and 70s may still be sailing somewhere in the world.

Sadly for Sibbick, his business fortunes declined along with the raters that had made his fame. His company was wound up in January 1903, though he continued to do some boatbuilding afterwards. Mystery surrounds his death in 1912 when, on the morning of 12 January, aged 62, he was presumed to have fallen out of his small rowing boat in Cowes harbour and drowned. The drifting dinghy was soon found; his body was washed up near the harbour entrance a few weeks later.

CB30 has more on Sibbick: reprints are available.

LAST SEEN IN THE 1960s AND 70s

Armored

1898, 30-ton ketch wrecked in the Caribbean in 1979.

Caprice

1896, 32ft (9.8m) One-Rater last heard of in Yarmouth IoW.

Chittabob III

1902, 24ft (7.3m) Linear Rater, 38ft (11.6m), last seen in Essex.

Debonair

1901, 45ft (13.7m), built as a Linear Rater, in Cowes in 1963.

Farewell

1902, 38ft cutter built in 1902 and last in Southampton.

Freedom

1899, 39ft (11.9m) cruiser, built as *Saunterer*, last in Newhaven.

Gwenda

1901, 36ft (11m) cutter built as *Frou Frou*, last in Buckler's Hard.

Halcyon

1900, 24ft (7.3m) cutter designed by E Tachell, last in Conyer.

Nanette

1903, 24ft (7.3m) sloop built as *Elsa*, at Henley on Thames in 1973.

Nevenda

1901, 36ft (11m) rater, built as *Minota*, a rater, last in Walton on the Naze.

Punctillio

1898, 30ft Linear Rater, 38ft (11.6m) LOA, in Dublin in 1963.

Saionara

1897, 36ft Linear Rater, 46ft (14m) loa, last in Glasgow.

Vixen

1902, built as *Kathleen*; raced as an 8-Metre, in Dartmouth in 1963.

So where are they now?

What happened to them? Are any alive and sailing or are they lurking at the back of a boatyard? And are there any other boats built – or designed – by Sibbick around the world? Please let us know.

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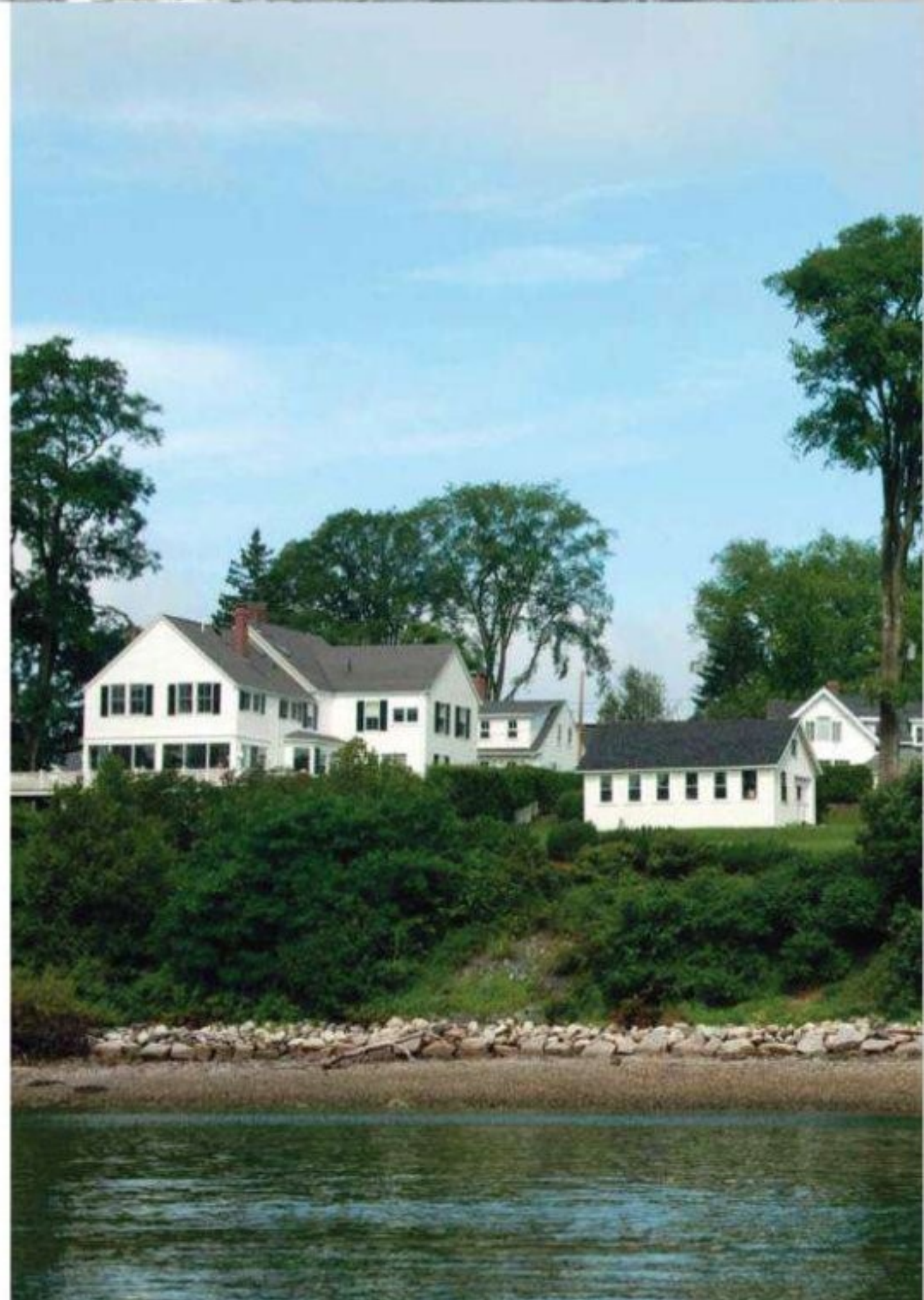
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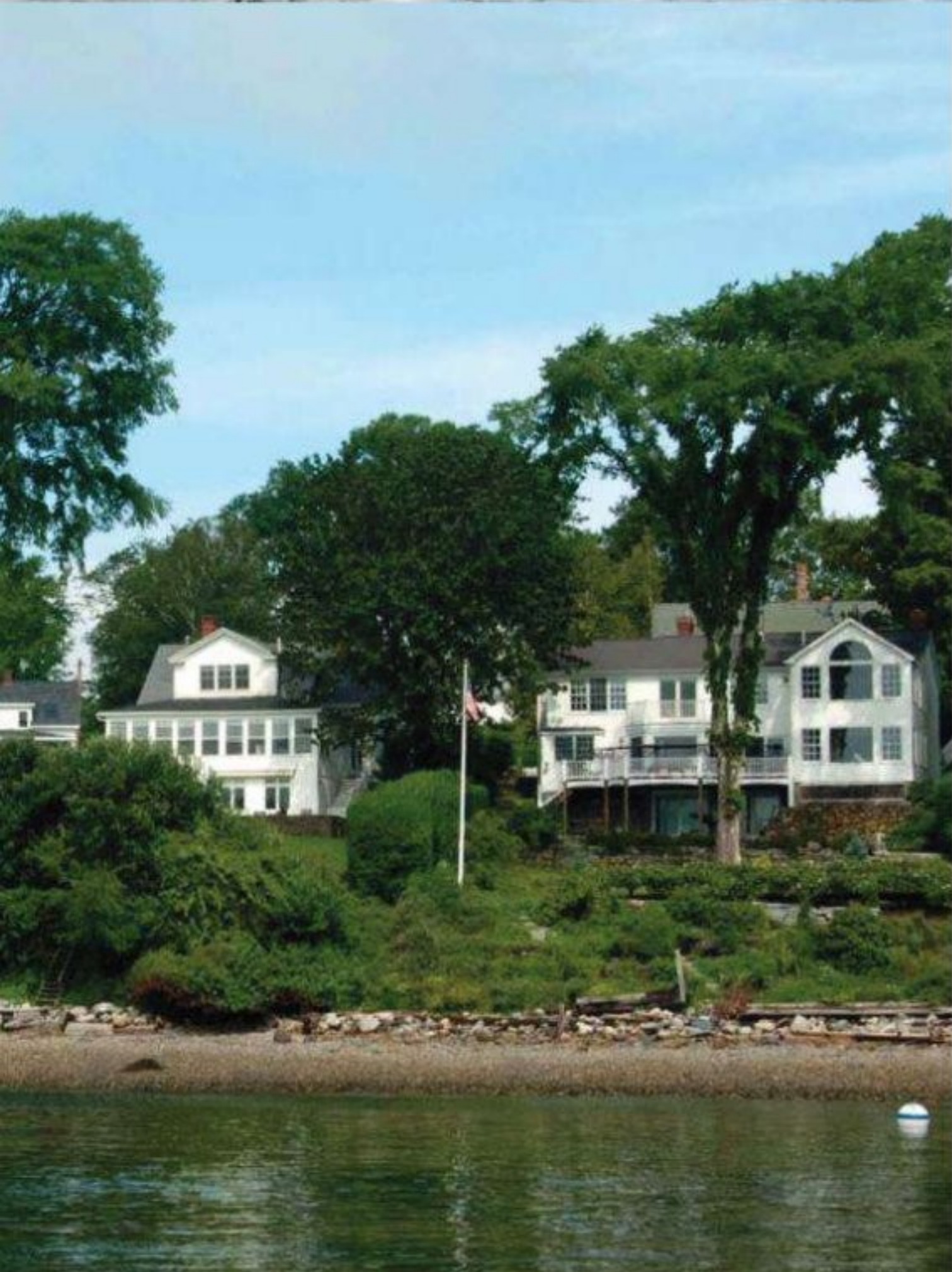




Among the pines

Castine's sheltered harbour played host to many Herreshoff and other boats this year. Words and photos by *Kathy Mansfield*





Above: Spartan, winner of the Herreshoff class, in chase of Neith and the P class Joyant

Castine, Maine, may seem like the end of the world – a 245-mile drive from Boston, ‘downeast’ as the locals say. That’s downwind from Boston by sail, heading northeast, using the prevailing southwest winds. I’m convinced the Maine roads stretch like rubber bands, they go on forever.

Better to go by sea if you can. It’s some of the best sailing you’ll find in the world, and Castine, when you arrive, is a part of the world you’ll most want to inhabit, at least in the summer. Its deep harbour, rocky shores, pine trees and islands sheltered the biggest seaport northeast of Boston in its heyday. Samuel de Champlain had been there by 1612, John Smith two years later. In its remarkably tumultuous history it has been settled and run by the French, Dutch (twice), British (twice, last in 1814) and Americans, not to mention several American Indian tribes before that. In 1779, during the War of Independence, it was the scene of America’s worst naval defeat until Pearl Harbor. Now it produces merchant seamen at the Maine Maritime Academy, and its quiet shores have enticed poets Longfellow and Robert Lowell, plus summer folk escaping from the toils of city life.

The organiser of the Castine Classics Race doesn’t believe in just sailing around buoys and repairing to the yacht club when there’s so much history and



Above: *Cara Mia*,
NY 30 built 1905

craftsmanship gathered in one place. It's got the fine buildings of the Maine Maritime Academy right there in which to host a symposium, and a town dock a few minutes' walk away where the boats are on display – and these are no ordinary talks, or boats.

Recent highlights have been the 75th anniversary of Sparkman & Stephens, and the 100th birthday of Olin Stephens. Olin, affectionately termed the rock star of yachting, always came with alacrity up to Castine, as did many others. To sailing enthusiasts, it's worth every mile of the trip. It must have been wonderful to be here when *Dorade*, which Olin designed when he was 21, won the race that celebrated his 100th birthday. Olin said he couldn't have had a better present.

This year it was the turn of Herreshoff yachts, particularly the New York 30, 40 and 50 classes. They had never sailed together before, each having their own races, and probably hadn't been in the same harbour for about 75 years. Two 1905-built 44ft (13.4m) NY 30s, *Alera*, with sail number 1, and *Cara Mia*, were down at the dock and open for visitors along with the recently restored New York 50 *Spartan*, from 1912.

On the Academy dock were more Herreshoff designs: the 53ft (16.2m) 1907 *Neith*, featured in last month's CB, the newly restored 47ft (14.3m) *Nellie* from 1902 (CB275), and the 1915 NY 40, *Marilee*. On moorings we had *Desperate Lark*, a Bar Harbor 31 built 1903,

and the 1911 58ft (17.7m) P class *Joyant*. Everyone there was amazed and intrigued to have such a fleet of historic Herreshoff boats gathered together – and so well restored and maintained.

Gatherings of this quality don't just happen. I met the maestro that pulls it together, and indeed pulls all of Castine together in the summer months when he leaves his Manhattan corporate securities law practice and settles into his Maine home. His name is David Bicks: he's the unofficial mayor of Castine, an invaluable asset from what I saw in my time there. On first sight he marshals his troops sternly, no wimpish behaviour allowed, but everybody sees the twinkle in his eye – they know he'll work just as hard for them when their need arises. There was evidence of that too.

ADMIRAL'S PROGRESSION

David Bicks walks slowly past the white clapboard houses to the town dock in his Breton red shorts, his Castine yacht club cap protecting his balding head, and it's like an admiral's progression, everybody greeting him and confirming their tasks have been completed or being sent on other errands.

Neighbours take sailors' laundry and return it to the boats, a twelve-year-old girl offered to bake brioche and blueberry muffins and deliver them to the docks in the mornings, the Pentagoet Inn and other hostelries worked

“Gatherings of this quality don’t just happen”

*Right: Mermaid,
S&S skippered by
Brooke Parish
Below right:
Elizabeth Meyer’s
Lawley-designed
Seminole*



overtime. It all works efficiently, spiced with jokes and laughter. An unexpected shower drenched us all but it didn’t matter, we dried out. The huge Maritime Academy convention hall was filled to overflowing when we got there later on. Another army of volunteers had been busy here, and a careful programme worked up bringing together a wide variety of people, backgrounds and talents to discuss the mystique of the Herreshoff boats.

And it’s not only the people of Castine whom David challenges and inspires. Gary Jobson, President of US Sailing, had just driven 750 miles from Annapolis, Maryland, I had been tempted over from England, others sailed their fine classic boats up hundreds of miles over the past week. Castine was ready for us all.

Kurt Hasselbalch, curator of the Hart Nautical and the Haffenreffer-Herreshoff Collections at MIT, started off the symposium by explaining why Herreshoff’s boats have survived so well. Nat Herreshoff was a brilliant engineer and designer, a student at MIT in its early days starting in 1866, just after the American Civil War. His exacting attention to quality of design, construction and use of materials was vital and innovative, way ahead of his times in many areas. He left an extensive collection of over 14,000 drawings and plans which have been invaluable to restorers, owners and historians. The quality of owners, from the beginning to the present day, has been special. And undoubtedly, there has been luck.



*Top: Alera, NY 30
built 1904
Above: Snow
Falcon, winning
Concordia
Left: Eaton’s boat
yard*

“The greatest one design racer/cruiser class ever built”



Above: Integrity,
a Quoddy Pilot
built 1972



Above right:
Seguin, a 42ft S&S

Halsey Herreshoff mentioned a few of his famous grandfather's innovations. For a start, he designed and built five winning America's Cup boats, and over 2000 craft in all. He had developed a catamaran back in 1876 that he clocked at 18 knots, beating everything at the great Centennial Regatta that year – they disallowed his entry and promptly banned catamarans.

In 1878 he developed the Cushing torpedo boat for the US Navy, with two engines. He developed time allowance tables when he was 17 to allow different boats to race together, and went on to work out the Universal Rule that was used for many decades in the US. His boat *Gloriana* in 1891 was the forerunner of the modern yacht, winning every race in her first season: Nat was invited to design for the America's Cup.

In the 1890s he had developed spade rudders and short keels. He designed crosscut patterns in sail design, sail tracks, better wood screws and bolts, making all his own fittings, and a manufacturing system that allowed him to build lighter boats and more cheaply than his competitors. And at the America's Cup Jubilee in 2001, out of 158 boats racing, Nat's New York 40s *Rugosa* (1915) and *Marilee* (1916) came in first and second.

Photographer Benjamin Mendlowitz discussed capturing the magic of these boats, and we saw rare 1901 footage of Herreshoff boats filmed by Thomas

Edison. The new owner of *Alera*, Claas van der Linde, spoke about the New York 30s that are considered by many, including Olin Stephens, to be the greatest one design racer/cruiser class ever built. Of the 18 that were built in 1905 and raced and cruised hard for decades, a dozen still survive. Maynard Bray explained that: “They have been raced and sailed in all kinds of weather, and with their original gaff sloop rigs enjoyed a reputation for never having to reef, no matter how hard it blew.”

Bob McNeil sails *Joyant* with his family, having bought her as a hulk in a poison ivy patch for \$1 and restoring her so carefully, even without auxiliary power as she was originally, that her previous owner refunded the dollar. Wayne George said he found the restoration of *Nellie* an experience of people and friendships as well as learning how well built the boats had been originally.

HIGH-PEAKED GAFFS

Sailmaker Eben Wilson, son of Nat, recreates the look of Herreshoff sails, and it was interesting to see how the low-aspect gaffs of the Buzzards Bay 30 developed to peak higher as time went on, the bowsprit and boom becoming shorter, foreshadowing the Bermudan sail. *Joyant* is a good example, with no bowsprit, the boom just over the transom, and the jackyard topsail filling in the gap. As for sailing these boats – they can handle like a dinghy despite their size, so well designed that small adjustments make all the difference.

Bob Vaughan, owner of *Desperate Lark*, realized somewhere between the ages of 6 and 16 that he wanted to own that boat. Many years later he borrowed \$500 to help buy her, then another \$500 for the rig. After 60 years of connection with the boat, he spoke movingly of the way she had become a part of the family, of their lives.

We repaired to the Castine Yacht Club for more discussions over a casual supper, looking out over these boats that would sail together in the morning. Wayne George's young sons Nate and Josh had been captivated by the talks, sitting for longer than most boys of their age, and I suspect that they were deciding which boats they were going to aim for in a decade or two.

Herreshoff documentary film

The Castine Classics Regatta is roughly a 20 mile race from Castine south to Camden, and most boats then continue on the Camden Feeder Race and to the Eggemoggin Reach Race. Boats are required to tow dinghies, though this was waived for the Herreshoff boats as a documentary film was being made by Gary Jobson, to be shown on ESPN TV. The race was postponed and also finished early due to lack of wind, but enough wind appeared during the event to provide some great views of these impressive boats. Besides the Herreshoff boats there were seven Hunt & Howland Concordias racing as a class, about ten Sparkman & Stephens designs, a Fife, Aldens, and the W Class in the Spirit of Tradition section.

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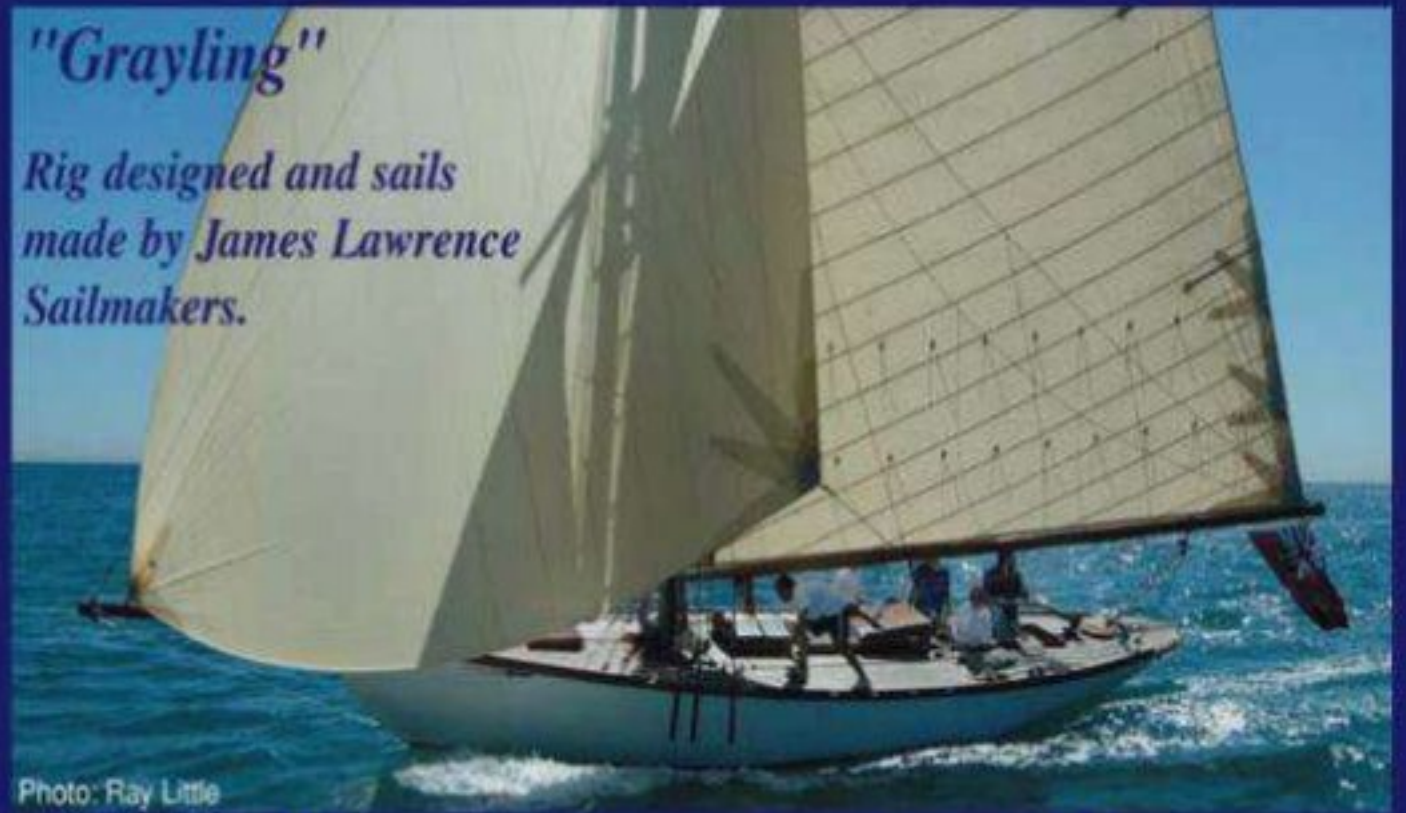


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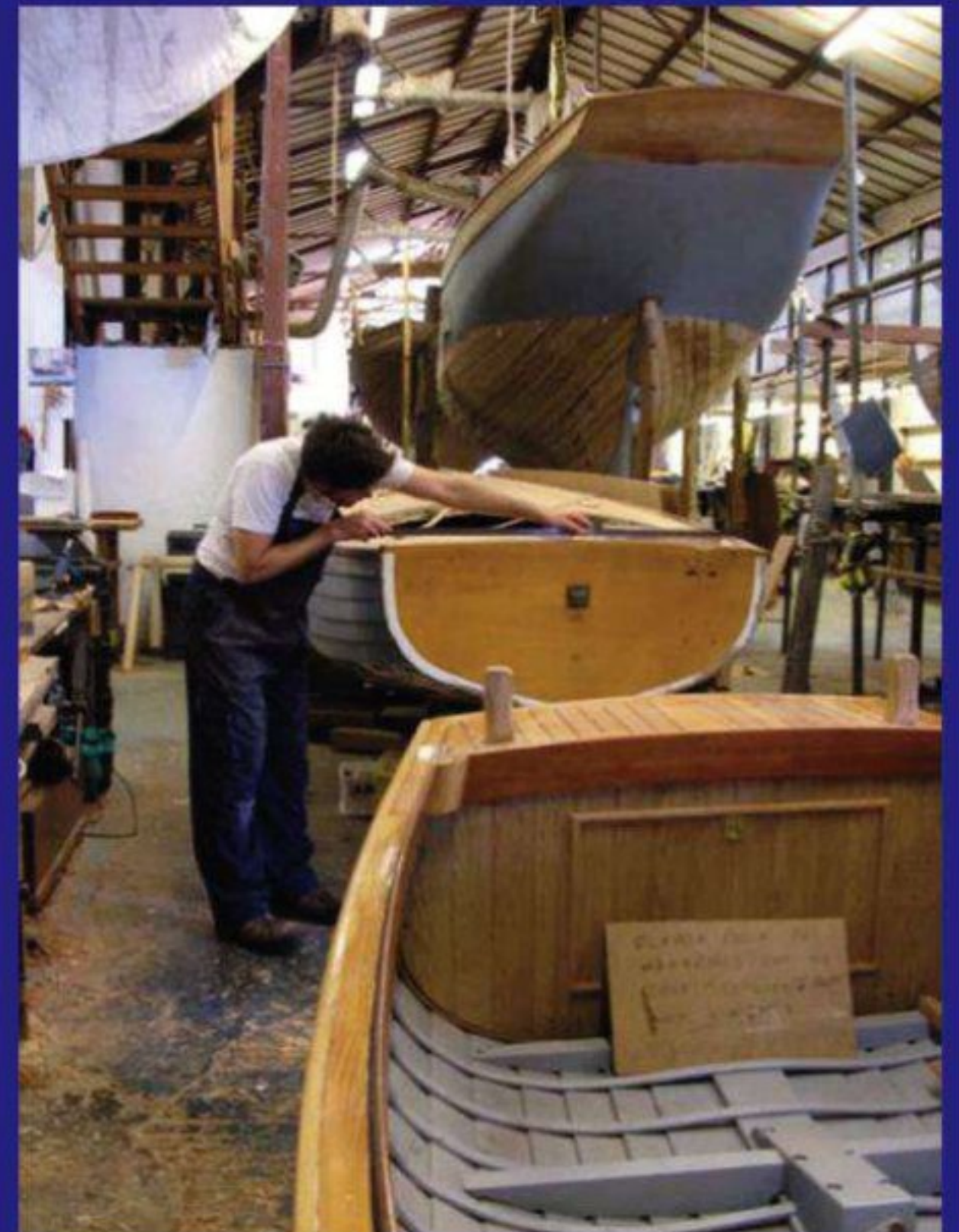
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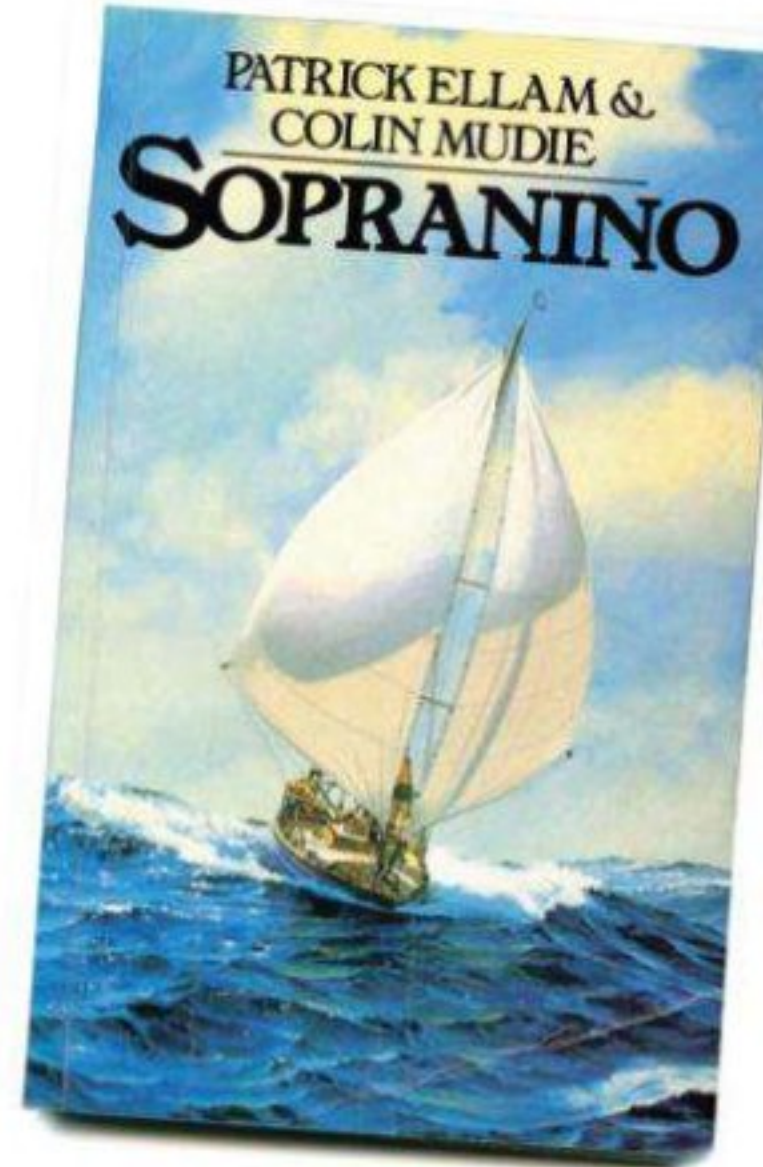
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A VOYAGE ROUND MY FATHER



It's now 60 years since 19ft *Sopranino's* transatlantic adventure marked the start of the Junior Offshore Group. Colin Mudie, half her crew, is interviewed by his son *Max Mudie*

It is not easy to appraise a family member and especially one who has done as much as my father. His profession is naval architecture, that incredibly difficult cross between science – especially the mathematics of three-dimensional form and energy flow – and art, where the end has to have some aesthetic resonance.

Anyone who has seen a lines plan and then an offset book which translates that hull shape into precise measurements from a given datum will see how tough it is to make pretty ships and boats that also perform well. As Colin – whose design portfolio includes *Tall Ships Royalist*, *Lord Nelson* and others – says, we must be mad to try and make vessels that exist at the interface of two of the most violently active fluids on the earth's surface.

He is a genuinely modest man. He doesn't talk down, and assumes equal knowledge on any subject being discussed with anyone he is talking to. He is also one of the few people I have met who have been born into their vocation. When CB asked him to name his favourite book he chose *Shipping Wonders of the World* which he has had since he was seven. You can imagine that his library has grown a bit since then.

He also says that mankind has not increased in brain power since the agrarian revolution 10,000 years ago: he reckons the boatbuilders of antiquity were akin to the engineers who build the space shuttles today (he can be like that, the feeling that he is bringing 10 millennia of historical knowledge to bear).

I have spent a day watching a master shipwright in a 'question and answer' duel with Colin to check whether the designer man knows anything about wooden construction, while Colin checked whether the shipwright knows his stuff because he is batting for the client and the end result must be a good one.

Tim Severin, who masterminded the *Brendan* voyage in the 1970s, said on first meeting Colin that he had expected a 'bluff seadog' of a man but while they talked: "He sat at his desk listening intently to my thesis... from the point of his pen flowed little ships and shapes, details of oars and masts."

You can list the things he has done: *Sopranino*, the Small World balloon, the Tall Ships, production cabin cruisers, Tim Severin's expedition vessels. His depth of knowledge is astounding. And he has a really dry sense of humour. There was a woman at a dinner party who is probably still not sure if you really are allowed to shoot down hot air balloons if they are over your land, as Colin once asserted.

He was an apprentice at the British Power Boat Company during the war. He still has his BPBC ID card: it is the shortest I have ever seen his hair. He was building MTBs, and everything else – from speedboats to round-bilged Admiral's barges – and building them in a factory manner, not like a boatyard. His apprenticeship took him through every department in the company.

ADVANCED DESIGNS

He then went to work for the Laurent Giles office in Lymington, on, he says, "really advanced designs".

And so to *Sopranino*. In 1951 he sailed with Patrick Ellam in this 19ft 8in (6m) clinker-built bermudan yacht across the Atlantic to the Canaries and then to Barbados.

"I'm not sure whose concept it was but she was a pretty boat – the planking was a pleasure to look at," Colin recounts. "Laurent Giles did the lines, I did the detail and Patrick was the client. Patrick was always talking and I was a good listener. In any situation he was looking for the practical or logical solution. The JOG [Junior Offshore Group - see overleaf] fleet used to do

Above: Colin Mudie at 85
Opposite: Colin and Patrick Ellam aboard *Sopranino* at Flushing, Falmouth in 1951, with fellow JOG member Mike Henderson on the foredeck



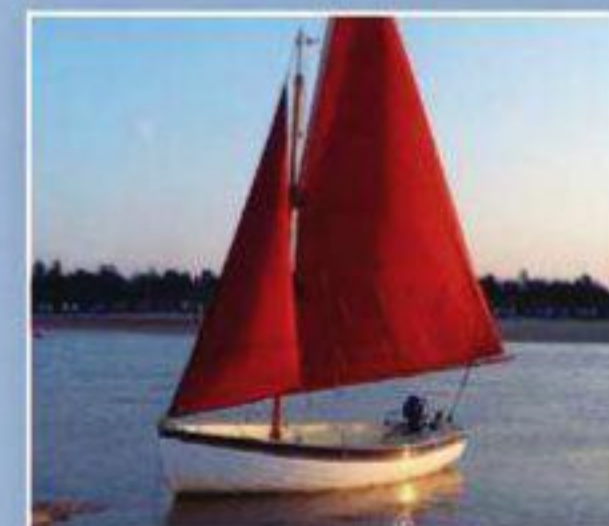


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Sopranino now restored and sailing; she's in the Classic Boat Museum, Cowes

cross-channel races and Patrick used to shepherd the fleet in his sailing canoe, having lent *Sopranino* to someone else. If it was rough he would go around the fleet checking that everyone was OK.”

Sopranino is a really small yacht, named after the smallest known wind instrument – although to confuse matters Colin often refers to her as *Poppalino*: he and Patrick were ‘Sopranauts’. They carried fizzy water in aluminium hot-water bottles to shave with and wash in.

THE ELEPHANT

They had a compass, sextant, tables, and a BEME loop radio which was there for direction finding – although Colin remembers it more because it was used to hang the hammock for the elephant.

You’ll need to read the book, still in print after 60 years: Patrick does much of the actual telling; Colin adds some humorous bits. But if you read it you will see that in this impossibly small boat they also had a stuffed elephant (called Hannibal) who had his own hammock. Colin remembers that he sat with his trunk facing down, suspiciously close to the drinks cabinet.

There was self steering – one using a load from the mainsheet – or in trade winds they set twin spinnakers so both could sleep below. Colin: “People say ‘weren’t you brave’ – no, we were out to enjoy ourselves.”

‘Big enough to sleep in’: how Junior Offshore Group began

BY COLIN MUDIE

Patrick Ellam started the whole thing off by using his sailing canoe *Theta* to sail between England and France. He enjoyed the swift sailing but had the trouble of finding a hotel for the night. If his boat was just a little larger he might sleep in her as well.

At that time I was one of the draughtsmen at Laurent Giles. Patrick came to see us; in due course *Sopranino* appeared and it was not long before Patrick, with Tony Needham, set off to shadow the Royal Ocean Racing Club (RORC) fleet in a race to Santander. They arrived not long after the race boats and came back to Lymington with some rather large tunny lashed to the starboard shrouds.

At that time ocean racing was getting more ‘professional’ in that new ocean racers concentrated on maximum rating performance by minimising weight including crew accommodation and home comforts afloat. Top ocean racers were planned for use for sea racing for a few days at a time and not for cruising. At the same time a boom in dinghy racing produced numbers of young dinghy racers accustomed to handling small craft.

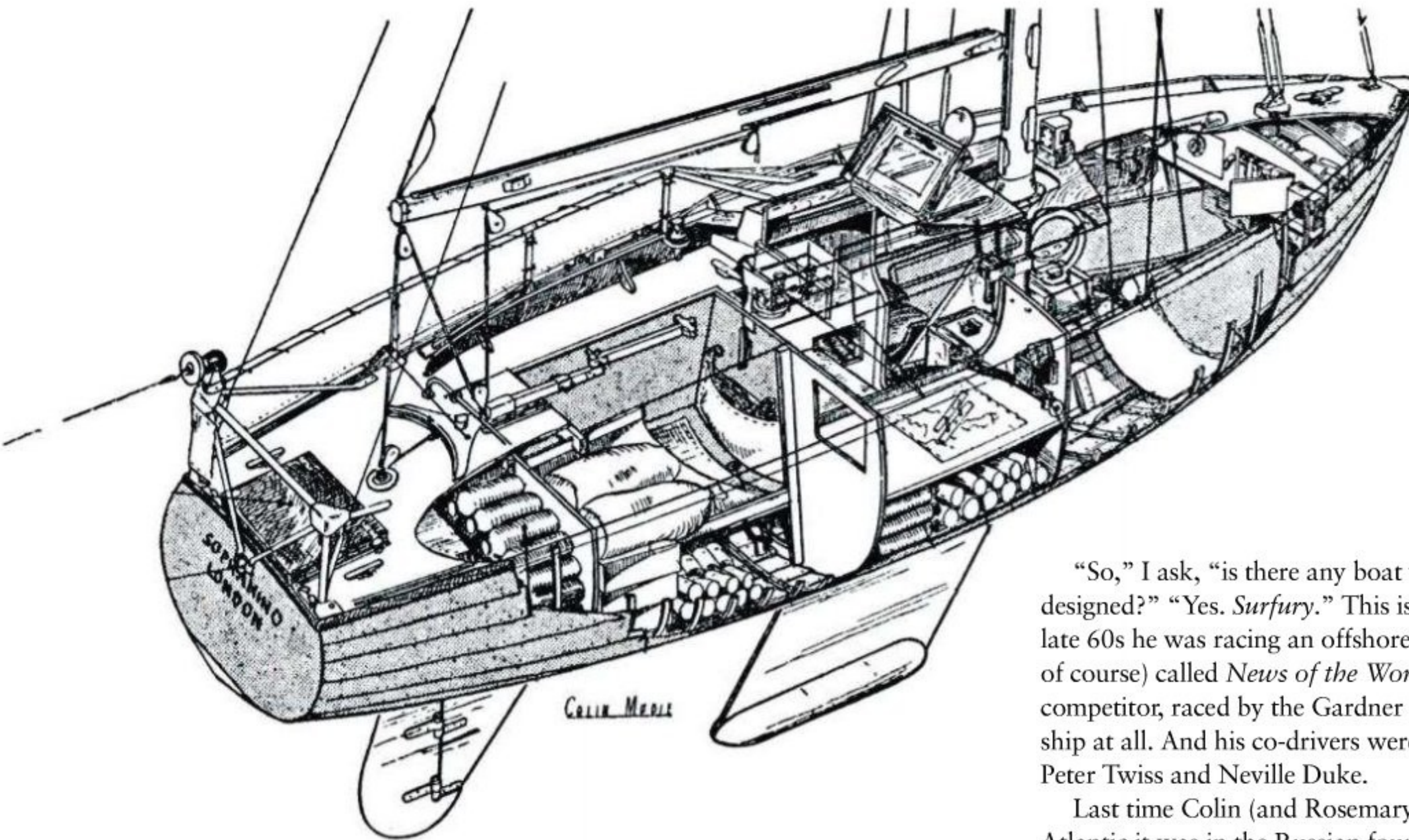
Along comes Patrick Ellam with *Sopranino*, which he quickly demonstrates can sail the ocean racing courses and offer not very inferior accommodation. This produced a tide of intention to race small boats, say across the Channel. At first there was some thought that the RORC might put on some contests, but this was



Above: Patrick Ellam, left, with Colin Mudie and *Sopranino* at the JOG 60th reunion in Falmouth this summer

seen by some as a possibly perilous step for what was now a club of some prestige. Also they only catered for bigger yachts.

I don’t know who put forward the idea of a Junior Offshore Group, but it may be significant that the Commodore of the RORC agreed to be the president and the RORC rating rule and general conditions were adopted from the beginning. This has echoed down history that the JOG was another credit in the distinguished career of my old friend Captain John Illingworth, but anything that dilutes any credit to Patrick Ellam is misdirected.



Above: Cutaway of *Sopranino*, by Colin Mudie, from his and Patrick Ellam's book *Sopranino*
Below right: The 'accommodation'

They both had lockers at the foot of their bunks – Patrick's was crammed with stuff while Colin's was half empty because, he says, 'this was my luxury'. *Sopranino* had a frame around the cockpit to stop sharks coming on board (again, I am not completely sure if he is being serious). On leaving harbour they filled the cockpit with ice for their drinks. She was 'a very compatible ship'.

The pictures show two gentlemen sailors, reefer jackets in port, reading the *Times* mid-Atlantic; the book also mentions David Niven, a mugging and a small nest of rats. The Corinthian ideal – of amateurism, sailing for sailing's sake – that *Sopranino*'s voyaging was all about is also reflected in the Junior Offshore Group.

It all segues easily into Colin's next transatlantic crossing in the *Small World*, a hydrogen balloon, with my mother Rosemary and two others. They left from the Canaries but had to ditch after 94½ hours aloft. He describes landing in the sea at 30ft/s vertically and the same speed longitudinally as "like a fairground ride". But since he had designed the gondola they happily sailed the rest of the way (1,500 nm) to Barbados.

It was 'not a catamaran but a W-shaped hull made from polystyrene foam with a terylene skin'. I push him on this – this is terylene the same as sails are made from and polystyrene the same as packing foam? The terylene was specially coated to take adhesive to hold it onto the foam. The mast was made by Jack Holt (the dinghy man) and carried a Ljungström double sail.

ROYALIST AND MARY ROSE

He designed sail training ships: "*Royalist* doesn't have a traditional hull form because she doesn't do traditional things like carry cargo." He consulted on the *Mary Rose*, before they raised her, drawing lines and a visual: "In logic what shape could she have been – which is the same for all tall ships and expedition vessels."

I ask him what vessels he was pleased with. He mentions *Sunspot* – a "geriatric sailboard" – and a canoe design with a "logic to its hull shape".

"So," I ask, "is there any boat you wish you had designed?" "Yes. *Surfury*." This is typical Colin: in the late 60s he was racing an offshore powerboat (his design, of course) called *News of the World* and *Surfury* was a competitor, raced by the Gardner brothers. Not a sailing ship at all. And his co-drivers were flying legends like Peter Twiss and Neville Duke.

Last time Colin (and Rosemary) sailed across the Atlantic it was in the Russian four-masted barque *Kruzenshtern* (375ft, 114m). As Colin says, there comes a time when you should sail with more crew than you have years in your age. He talks fondly of a more recent afternoon on *Lord Nelson* (181ft, 55.2m), off Tenerife, wandering the deck with the Chief Officer, tweaking sheets and braces together to see what her actual top speed might be.

WITH SOPRANINO IN FALMOUTH

I spent a pleasantly active day with Patrick and Colin – and *Sopranino* – in Falmouth, in July for the JOG's 60th anniversary. Patrick is 90, Colin 85. They have been busy since those days in 1951 and 52 and the feeling was that this was but one part of all that they had achieved. They hadn't met since 1968 when Colin was touring the US with a Winston Churchill Fellowship.

Sopranino herself has had a less hectic life, although she is now part of the Classic Boat Museum in Cowes, Isle of Wight, has been restored and is sailing again.

And so there they all were, two men plus a really quite compact yacht on the lawn of the Royal Cornwall Yacht Club next to the point where Robin Knox-Johnston came ashore in 1969 after his epic round-the-world voyage (in *Suhaili*, 32ft, 9.8m).

And during that day there was only really one question that I (and others) asked them: would they do it all over again? "Of course." "Yes." No hesitation.





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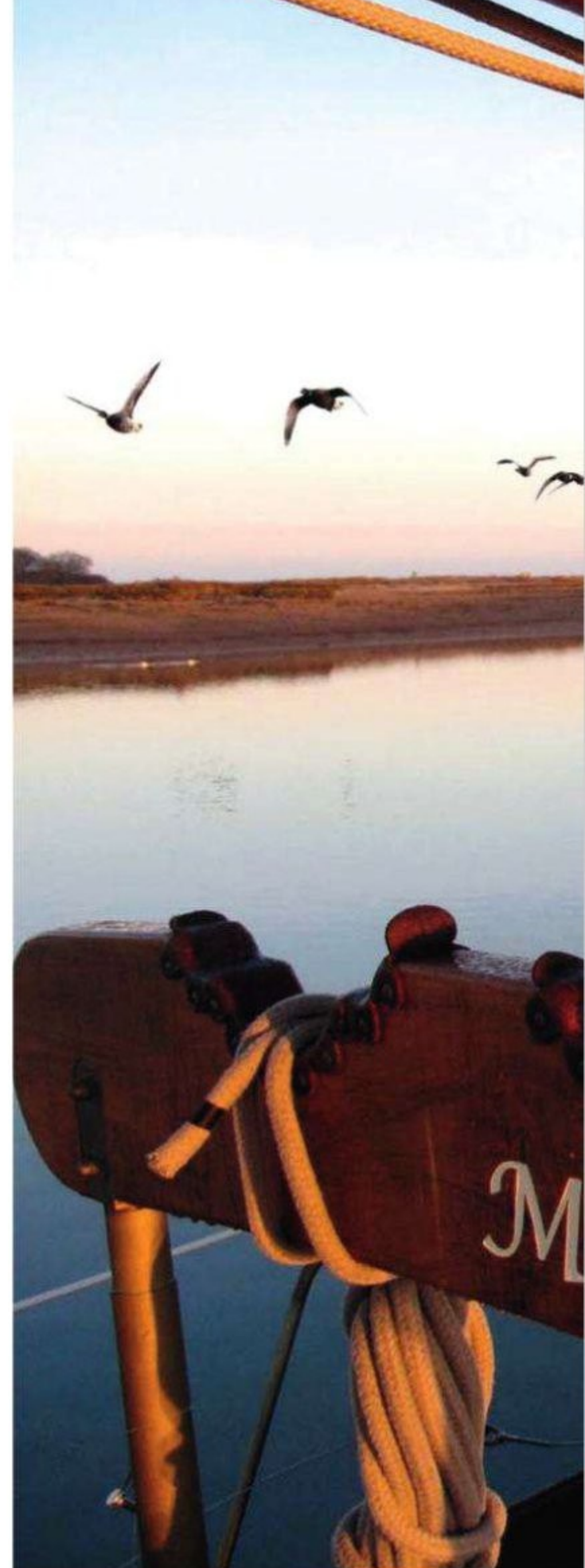


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NATIONAL HISTORIC SHIPS PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

WINNERS

Whether they are evocative, action or narrative in style the photos in this year's entry list impressed us hugely



Children as young as five were among the 350 or so entries to this year's National Historic Ships photography competition. And the judges were very impressed with the standards of the entries... we'd love to have printed more. The overall winner was Mike Garlick's 'Maybird. Early morning Newtown Creek' which judges felt conveyed a wonderful sense of what sailing a lovely wooden boat was all about. Mike cleaned up this year, being runner up in Category A as well as the Classic Boat Prize, won by Tom Finnie for his evocative scene of the *Glenlee*. We were amazingly impressed by Leila Webb's perfect composition from Chatham, in the Primary School category, as we were for Daisy Stagg's Purton Graveyards. Next year's competition will be announced in April, but you can enter pictures from any time.

CATEGORY A HISTORIC VESSELS ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC VESSELS

OVERALL WINNER (ABOVE RIGHT)
Mike Garlick 'Maybird. Early morning Newtown Creek'

HIGHLY COMMENDED (LEFT)
Mike Garlick 'Maybird. Final Fastnet training'

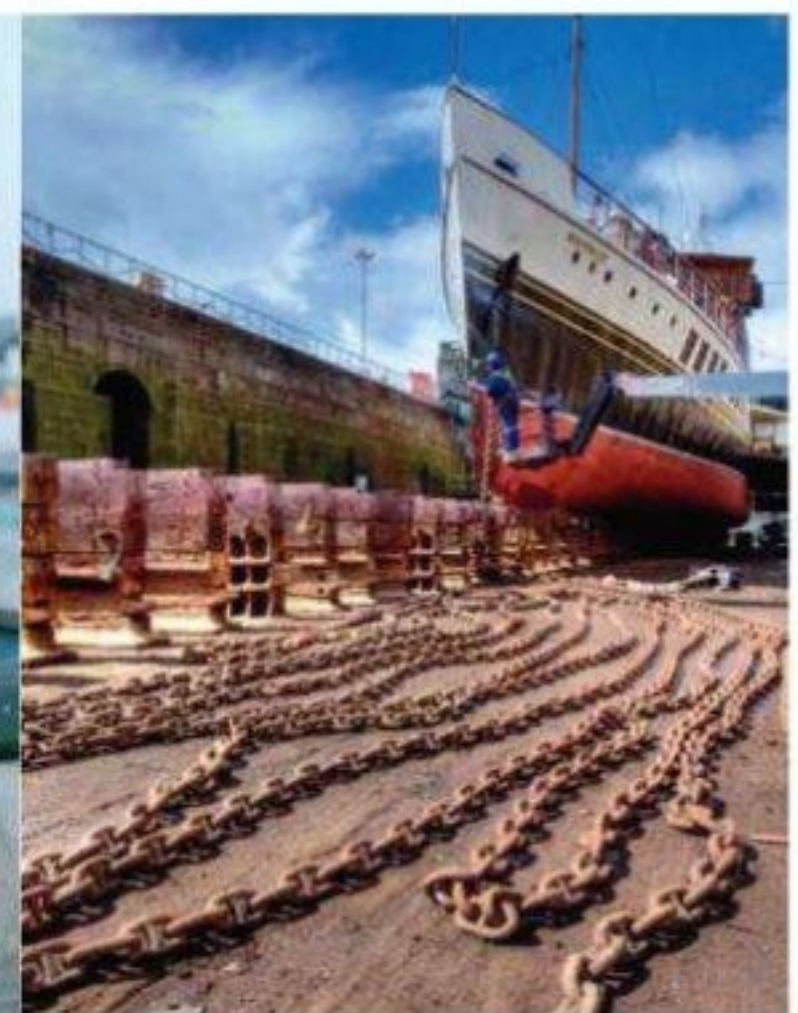
Classic Boat will be producing a 2012 calendar together with NHS



CATEGORY B
**TRADITIONAL
 MARITIME SKILLS
 IN ACTION**

WINNER (RIGHT)
 Andrew Guest 'Chris
 and Snowdrop'

HIGHLY COMMENDED (FAR RIGHT)
 Alan Kempster
 'The signwriter'





National Historic Ships and Classic Boat 2012 Calendar

Classic Boat will be producing a calendar using some of the photos from this competition. We are starting work on it as we go to press, so please see our website (p7) or the January issue (out December 8) for more details.

CATEGORY D CLASSIC BOAT AWARD

WINNER (ABOVE RIGHT)

Tom Finnie 'Glasgow Tall Ship Glenlee is towed down the Clyde to go into dry dock at Greenock'

HIGHLY COMMENDED (ABOVE)

Mike Garlick 'Polly Agatha mid Channel'



**CATEGORY C1
PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN**

WINNER (FAR LEFT)

Leila Webb aged 5 from Barham CE Primary School, Canterbury
'Chatham dockyard boat building shed'

HIGHLY COMMENDED (LEFT)

Lawrence Donnelly aged 7 from Brookland School, Blackheath 'HMS Cavalier bell'

**CATEGORY C2
SECONDARY SCHOOL CHILDREN**

WINNER (RIGHT)

Daisy Stagg aged 12 from Redland Green School, Bristol
'Purton barge graveyard'

HIGHLY COMMENDED (FAR RIGHT)

Alice Cameron aged 14 from Redland Green School, Bristol
'Canal boats'



DUCHY original

Hand-crafted in Cornwall, the Duchy 27 is Cockwells' new luxury GRP launch. *Peter Poland* went for a trip with her builder



PHOTOS BY PETER POLAND

Left, from top:
Dave Cockwell
demonstrates
fingertip steering;
spacious cockpit;
planing if you want



It's not often that a traditional boatbuilder with wood shavings in his hair decides to add a GRP craft to his range. So when Dave Cockwell of Cockwells Modern & Classic Boatbuilding invited me to test his new Duchy 27 motor launch for Classic Boat, I jumped at the opportunity.

Readers of CB will of course already be familiar with Cockwells' woodworking and shipwrighting skills. Exquisite new pilot cutters such as *Merlin* and *Polly Agatha*, distinctive bespoke motor boats such as the Andrew Wolstenholme-designed *LIIT* and the Burnett-designed *Ocean Fauna* – not to mention restorations – all vouch for their respected position in the market.

This new design – the GRP Duchy 27 – started life as the *Aquila* (CB199). So when Dave Cockwell bought the mould tools for this Andrew Wolstenholme-designed launch, he already knew how well it performed. However, he has incorporated numerous modifications and some of his own woodworking magic to add the finishing touch of quality. And he persuaded the Princess Royal to officiate at the launch last July of the first one.

I was due to be picked up by Dave Cockwell on the Royal Southern Yacht Club's pontoon on the River Hamble. As I waited in the sunshine, I watched a procession of modern gin palaces churn down the river – some of which (in the immortal words of a chum who used to own a classic 12-Metre) looked like a cross between a training shoe and a suppository. No surprise, therefore, that the Duchy 27's shapely retro outline stood



out amongst this lot and was immediately recognisable. The elegant looks of this boat are undoubtedly part of its appeal and I noted how some of my fellow club members soon took note and asked what it was.

As Dave flicked the bow thruster, spun the Duchy around and backed her aft platform towards the pontoon, I got a clear view of one of the defining characteristics of a classic motor yacht hull: the generous tumblehome on the aft topsides. Whether on a Riva launch driven (backwards) by Tony Curtis in *Some Like It Hot*, or here on a 2011 vintage Duchy 27, tumblehome is part of the classic charm. Even though it is more difficult (and thus expensive) to extract a GRP hull with tumblehome from a mould, it is a 'must' on any class act.

ONTO THE PLANE

Once under way, I set about noting speeds at different engine revolutions. The single 200hp Toyota Landcruiser-based Nanni diesel will push the boat up to around 24 knots, but most owners will prefer to drive this tractable semi-displacement hull at lower and more economical speeds. At a sedate 1,000rpm, she trundled down river at 5.3 knots. Once out into Southampton Water, 1,500 brought up 7.5 knots and then she lifted seamlessly onto the plane at around 2,300rpm and 13 knots. At 3,000 rpm we made 18.5 knots and 3,500 rpm saw 23 knots. Noise levels were pleasingly low. Dave considers the ideal cruising speed – the 'sweet spot' – to be 18 knots at around 2,800 rpm.

Steering the Duchy 27 is a delight. Visibility all round is good (on or off the plane) and response to the controls is precise and predictable.

As designer Andrew Wolstenholme told me, "She has a warped-bottom planing hull with a moderately deep and fine bow which runs into the keel. The keel is deep enough to fully protect the prop, and the tunnel is there to keep the draught down to a sensible 85cm (2ft 10in). This combines to give her excellent all round handling and a civilised soft ride." He confirmed her best cruising at around 18 knots.

On autopilot, she continued to steer straight and true – even at full speed. Travelling in the Duchy 27 is a pleasurable experience. In many ways, she is a small boat but with a steady, big-boat feel.

Closer inspection of the engine compartment revealed part of the reason for our comfortable and low-noise progress. The hinging engine box is comprehensively insulated and the engine itself sits on free-floating mounts while a Python constant-velocity joint flexible coupling with a thrust bearing transfers the poke from engine to shaft. And the teak decking on the cockpit sole acts as an extra sound deadener.

And what about Cockwells' GRP work? Has a yard more accustomed to fairing, finishing and buffing a painted timber hull produced a fine finish on its first 'plastic' hull and superstructure? The answer is an unequivocal yes. It was a bright sunny day, and the Duchy positively gleamed. As far as the GRP structure is

“The cockpit is a pleasant place to relax”



DUCHY 27

LOA
27ft (8.2m)

LWL
25ft 7ins (7.8m)

BEAM
9ft 2in (2.8m)

DRAUGHT
2ft 9in (0.85m)

AIR DRAUGHT
7ft 4ins (2.25m)

DISPLACEMENT
3.25tons

ENGINE
Toyota-based
Nanni 200hp

BUILDER
Cockwells, Mylor
Creek, Cornwall

Above, from left:
Solid oak fittings;
generous
V-berths; teak
deck and
immaculate finish
Below: The
built-in tool
drawer

concerned, designer Andrew Wolstenholme told me, “The mouldings are conventional polyester laminates with a mixture of chopped strand mat and woven rovings. The topsides are 2.9kg/m² (just under 10oz/sqft) and the bottom is 4.15kg/m² (14oz/sqft). The superstructure is 2.1kg/m² with 12mm balsa core on horizontal deck surfaces.”

The real USP of this launch, however, is the level and quality of its finish and fit-out. Everywhere you look, you see class and attention to detail. The Duchy 27 is designed for those who appreciate the finer things and know what they want. As Dave enigmatically said, “Either people want one (and several do); or they don’t. Nobody needs one.”

TWO... OR A CROWD

This is a craft in which two can sleep down below and a crowd can congregate in the cockpit (though possibly not at the same time). The interior features twin V settee berths in soft white leather, with an infill, a very spacious and well-finished heads and a generous-sized galley unit.

The cockpit is also spacious and comfortable: quality upholstery, a folding table, and a cunning fold-down gate aft that gives easy access to the stern platform, all work well. This is a pleasant place to relax, and of course to acknowledge the admiring glances of passers-by.


And there are the numerous little ‘touches’ that set the Duchy 27 apart from the crowd. All the cups, plates and glasses, for example, are hand-made specifically for the

boat by Cornish craftsmen. No Tupperware or plastic here. What’s more, they all stow neatly in specially shaped drawers and racks. There’s also a drawer under the helmsman’s seat housing the most comprehensive set of tools I have ever seen on a boat, with each item sitting snugly in its own tailored and padded recess.

Then take a close look at the woodwork. The meaty heads door and locker fronts are made from solid oak with traditional joints. Another pleasing cockpit detail is the discreet little LED light on the step. And there are mini spots recessed into the underside of the aft coachroof. These ensure that no one should take a purler when coming aboard in the dark after a run ashore; and they mean you can then tarry a while in the cockpit (enjoying a final malt perhaps) before hitting the sack.

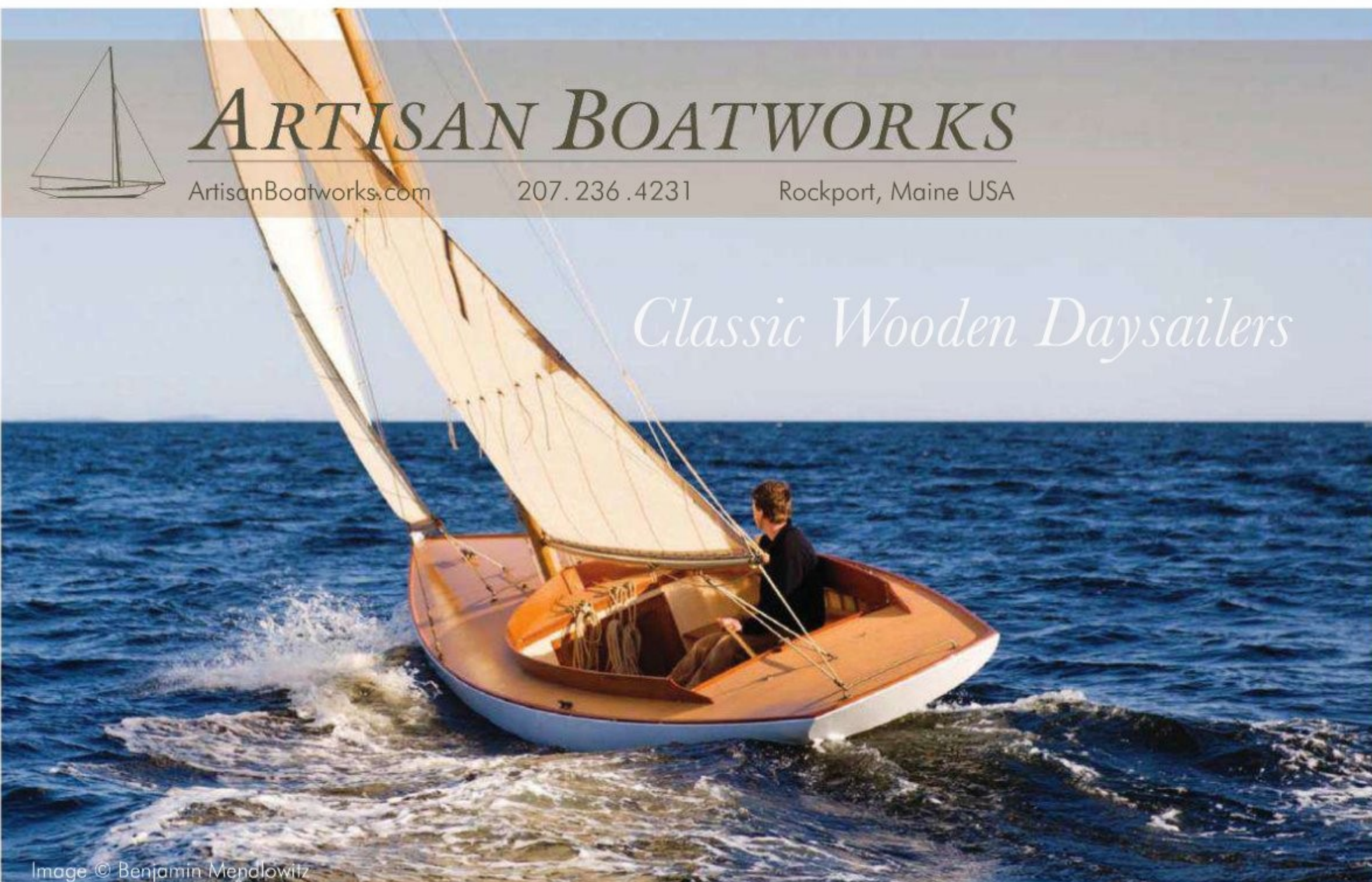
Of course all this quality and attention to detail does not come cheap. With the standard specification, the Duchy 27 comes in at £120,000 plus VAT; and some of the optional extras on offer might be considered essential. But she is special. I was amused to watch a married couple I know eye up the Duchy 27 as she lay alongside the club pontoon. They are retired and enjoy sailing their 37ft yacht. They told us – as we took lunch on the club balcony – that a day would come when a Duchy 27 could be just the ticket. But not just yet. “That’s fine,” said Dave with a smile, “there’s no hurry. I play a long game.”






Tärnan was built in 1913 on Sternö shipyard in Karlskrona, for shipping boulders. During the following years to 1965 she was shipping stone, salt, iron, timber. Our family bought **Tärnan** in 1966 and has since then worked to restore her to original exterior condition, including the schooner rig. Since the '80s **Tärnan** has sailed with school children, events, group and corporate charters. The crew gets the opportunity to experience old-time sailing vessels, combined with modern comfort. Fully equipment kitchen for 16 people. 4 cabins for 12 guests. Sails in dacron total (9) and further 7 main sails duradon.

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UP THE THAMES NEREIS

Reaching the Thames

The Thames Revival festival in September was an excellent reason to take *Nereis* around the coast and into London, but on the way to Maldon she started leaking. By *Dan Houston*

It had been the best of sails, but our passage is now defeated – by a leak. To end the summer we had cruised *Nereis* from her Shoreham, Sussex, base to the Medway in the Thames estuary and then on up to the Thames Revival festival in St Katharine Docks. Now, after a superb sail downriver to an overnight anchorage, we had weighed early to catch the ebb tide out of the estuary and north to the Essex port of Maldon – it's to be their town regatta this weekend.

Dan Webb built *Nereis* in Maldon in 1936 and so this being her 75th anniversary I had felt it would be fitting to take her into the Blackwater again. I hadn't booked, of course. I have sailed old wooden boats for long enough to know how the plan changes. But it is our intention and we are making good time, rocking over the wind-against-tide chop, tacking out around the Maplin Sands off the Essex coast in the brisk easterly breeze.

We're just short of Blacktail Spit when photographer Emily Harris, a Blackwater smack sailor who is crewing and checking the chart below, notices water at the lee edge of the cabin sole. *Nereis'* pump – the automatic Whale Gulper – has been working hard but is unable to keep up with the ingress. We heave to, to pump out by hand and assess the situation. Hove-to on port now the Whale copes with the leak and it's clear we are not sinking. But on

starboard she makes more water than the one pump can cope with – we'd have to pump by hand as well. With 12nM to go to the Wallet Spitway – which will be our first chance of bearing away – it will clearly be a risky and uncomfy passage. So it seems we have two choices: to run back up over the tide to the Medway (10nM) or to sail south across the tide to the Swale (8nM). We have around two hours of east-making tide with us, so south it is.

SHALLOW WATER

Decision made, it's time to put up more sail and get across the estuary as fast as possible. I consider contacting the Coastguard, but our brilliant emergency services are also very keen and I don't want to end up being towed somewhere else. We clearly are not sinking; we can manage our situation and one of the reasons for heading for the Swale is that the Iron Wharf boatyard is at the top of Faversham Creek and I know we'll be among friends there and I can get this thing fixed.

We get into shallow water on the northeast coast of the Isle of Sheppey without incident, but we've been headed some and have to tack east along the 2m contour at the bottom of the tide. We'll have to tack about 2nM around the Columbine Spit to get into the Swale and on starboard we are pumping out by hand again. Our speed

Above: Moray McPhail helms us under the Queen Elizabeth II bridge at Dartford, which has 53m air draught (above MHWS)





STEFFAN MEYRIC HUGHES

has dropped to 4 knots over the ground. We've been quite calm aboard, just concentrating on navigation and sailing – although I'd felt my brain running quite hard as I mentally flipped through the options for action when we discovered that water in the bilge.

Now Emily takes off her ring and dashes it onto the cockpit sole; the handle on the Davey's brass bilge pump doesn't suit rings it seems. It's about the only moment that describes our frustration. We spend a tense hour edging in over the oyster flats, aware that the incoming tide is just starting to make against us. Using our depth sounder I follow a metre contour (under keel) across the Columbine Spit; at last we are into the deeper water of the Swale and we run up to find a mooring off Faversham Creek. Emily cooks a late breakfast; I apologise that the cooker is still not on gimbals. It's a sunny day, a great day for sailing.

Our last bit of nav is negotiating the twisting creek itself. I haven't sailed a boat of my own here since we kept *Salote* here 20 years ago and it hasn't changed at all. We motor up at the top of the tide past the Hollowshore yard at the confluence of the Oare and Faversham creeks and past once-familiar places like the Shipwright's Arms. The unfamiliar deep channel is between shallows on either side and I stand on the foredeck heaving a useful little lead on some string to see where the deeper channel lies. We



EMILY HARRIS

Above: Flats in Limehouse Reach with Canary Wharf skyscrapers in the background
Left: Starboard-hand marker in Faversham Creek



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Sailing in the wakes of many of England's most famous captains



Above: Nereis at the Thames Revival festival in St Katharine Docks in the heart of London
Below right: At Faversham, next to Thames barge Mirosa

manage to hit the putty once but get off easily enough. At the Iron Wharf they're waiting for us and we practically sail into slings. As *Nereis* comes out of the water I expect to see some loose caulking or at least evidence of the garboards working. But there's nothing. "Must be the keelbolts," I think with a slightly sinking feeling about what that can do to an average bank account.

But I am also surprisingly upbeat in myself. I regard the evolution as an exercise in self-reliance and I feel a bit more East Coast than South Coast – always a positive.

HISTORIC REACHES

We'd also had such great sails, both around the coast into the London River and then up into the Thames proper. The day before had been one of those seminal sails where we'd made the most of the huge 6.3m tidal range. Close-hauled past flats at Island Gardens opposite the old Royal Naval College at Greenwich we'd been making more than seven knots over the ground and we came close enough to touch the wall. It had felt like roller-blading – long lee-bowed boards down the reaches of this historic river. They have such great names: Bugsby's Reach, Gallions, Fiddler's or the evocative Lower Hope.

New housing and abandoned industry line these reaches recalling how the river was an arterial highway to the capital, bringing waterborne trade up into the heart of London. It's also a river which is friendly to a sailor who uses the tide and is not afraid of his anchor. I've been using a fisherman's, which has proved excellent in the designated anchorages we found on the charts.

Sailing upriver a few days previously – against a westerly, which you'd expect... just as we had an easterly going down – I had been joined by Moray McPhail of

Classic Marine and we had not managed to make the passage from the mouth of the Medway to St Katharine Haven in one tide. We anchored in the aptly named Halfway Reach, a mile or so downriver from the Thames Barrier. Supper on the hook had been an entirely pleasant experience – we had six herons working the southern bank a few feet away from us for company. There are also a lot of cormorants working the river all the way up into the city; and the next day waiting for the lock into St Kat's I saw a seal break the surface, which must be rare.

SAILING IN THEIR WAKES

We had shot past that anchorage on the return passage downriver and we were still making six knots going past Gravesend, 12 nM on. In light night airs, with barely a ripple on the water in the lee of eastern banks, we'd sailed down into the final Sea Reach, tracking the silver beams of moonlight, just a couple of days after a full moon. It felt like sailing in the wakes of many of England's most famous captains, from Francis Drake, who apprenticed to a shipmaster in these waters, to Horatio Nelson, who joined the Royal Navy aged 12, at Chatham, and who would run a cutter upriver to Greenwich and back as a teenage midshipman.

Big ships come past and it makes sense where possible to sail just out of the edge of their channel – paying attention to depth and the chart, but there's a surprising amount of room even upriver, where one is more likely to come across one of the fast passenger catamarans sweeping along at 22 knots.

The last anchorage had been at Hole Haven, on the southwest coast of Canvey Island. We could see the tide had turned and was already making back upriver at some rate. We'd dropped anchor by the fire tug, just off the creek entrance and slept out the rest of the incoming tide.

Nereis had not made it back to her place of build this year but we'd had a great cruise in some of the most interesting waters of these islands. And I feel like we have really used the boat, in only her third big cruise since getting her back in the water after a long refit.

Maybe we'll get there next year... there's a bit of work to do now.



EMILY HARRIS



Left: Admiralty Leisure folio charts and, near left the latest Imray C series. The GPSMap78s is great, but should not replace a paper chart.

Using charts and plotters: strengths and weaknesses

Navigating from Shoreham, Sussex, east to Dover and then around the Kentish coast to the North Foreland and from there into the Thames estuary and upstream into London presents plenty of good exercise for a navigator. Many a bluewater sailor has crossed the oceans of the world to go fast aground in the shifting sands of the great estuary. On board *Nereis* (and before) we've used the excellent Admiralty Leisure folio of charts for years, and we back this up with an older Raytheon (Raymarine) chart plotter and radar – which we acquired cheap at the time of relaunch. We also borrowed Garmin's wunderkind of electronic gizmos, the know-and-do-it-all GPSMap78s – and asked Imray to send us some of their charts of the area too for comparison.

GPS is so very reliable that it threatens to make us lazy about traditional methods of navigating. We should still use depth in conjunction with position plots to double-check things, for instance. And we should keep our eyes open. Our GPS systems here rely on the boat's battery and, for the Garmin, AA batteries – which typically last a day with the screen turned down to save power. You can't always rely on battery power in small boats so paper charts are still invaluable, and it sounds obvious but they are also bigger with much more information easier to see.

The £38 Leisure folios offer fantastic detail and are easy to use; being A2 size (594x420mm) you don't have to fold them. They're in packs for a designated area, so

for the Thames estuary we used the 5606 folio of 12 (often double) sheets of chart paper with scales from 1 : 250,000 down to 1 : 5,000 (for Ramsgate's harbour plan). They come in a handy plastic wallet which can be taken on deck. They are brilliant and the information on them is clear and easy to glean – for instance, we found our anchorages very easily with them. A problem is that the scale shifts from one folio to the next, which takes getting used to and you need to mark them like a road atlas – with arrows pointing to which is the next chart to use. It is easy to mix them up. They are also very close up, and sometimes the planning chart is such a small scale that it's not useful; hinterland detail is sometimes missing.

In contrast the £18 Imray C series of charts (they publish A2 chart folios as well) are much larger, at 1118x787mm, and made in plasticised paper which is harder to tear than the Admiralty's. The C2 Thames chart covers the river in three sections on one piece of paper. And although the scale changes from 1 : 40,000 down to 1 : 13,700 it is better for planning and contains as much information as the Admiralty for the scale. Showing more area also allows you to see into the hinterland – always useful when looking for charted features or transits.



ELECTRONIC OBJECT OF DESIRE

Made to fit the hand, the £300 GPSMap78s has none of the broad scale of a chart, but it acts like a chart plotter and can be worn around the neck. We found it brilliant in negotiating tricky nav like the Gore Channel west of Margate. One of its main advantages is that you can stay on deck and not disturb the crew. It also has a compass which can be set up in either true or mag. While that may not be such a boon it has a 'point and go' feature where you point the 78s at a charted feature, click on it and the chart plotter then takes you there – which is useful in cross tide situations where you might not have found a good transit to keep you on your charted course.

GPS's best feature is the bearing and distance and the 78s gives you this by moving the cursor over to a charted object. It is very easy to use and you can set it to close down every 30 seconds or so, saving battery power. In fact it slightly makes obsolete the older plotter (if you discount the useful radar function), though not paper charts. We found it suitably rugged in use and are wondering if Santa might bring us one to keep...



Above: Garmin's GPSMap78s is an awesome piece of kit in the hand

Right: Old Raytheon plotter still going strong using C-Map software

Tough phone

Although there are plenty of waterproof covers for phones on the market, they don't really work. The shockproof, waterproof ITTM Outlimits DSS phone really does. It has a torch, SOS quick dial, rubberised casing and doesn't take a technological step backwards when it comes to features. The best bit, though, is the fact that you can get two SIM cards in it, thus doubling your chance of network coverage – and two people out for a sail can both leave their normal phones at home and stop worrying. Oh, and it floats. £119 plus VAT.



www.thephonetrader.co.uk

Pure wool flat cap

Due to the range of sizes and the fact that they're well made, these 1920s-style caps stay on the head in high wind and are nice and warm as well as giving the wearer a sense of ragtime gangster charm. The Stetson 'Hatteras' flat cap is made from chunky knit pure new wool and is lined and comfy. Not cheap at £69.99 but nothing that's any good is. They are also available in leather, waxed cotton, linen and brown herringbone silk.

www.nauticalia.com



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www.drainman.nu



Henri Lloyd Shockwave jacket

As well as being a very good lightweight jacket with nice touches like a watch window and glasses cleaner, it's the side windows in the hood that really impressed us. No more turning your head into the darkness of the inside of your hood or attempting to mix a sou' wester with the foulie high collar. Now you can see all around you in filthy weather. A big problem solved. £240

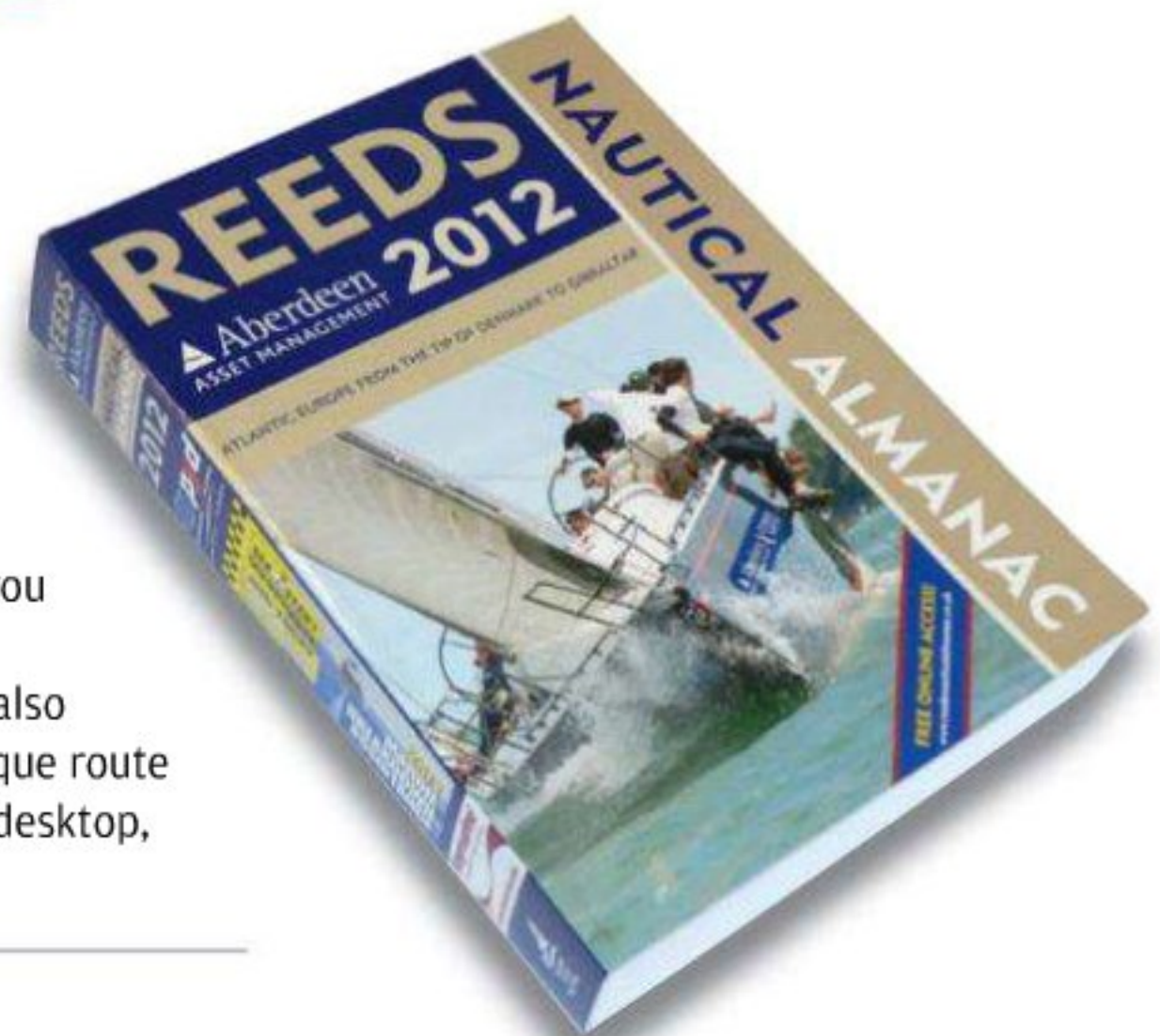
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Gull

BY VANESSA BIRD

Launched in 1956, this 11-footer was designed by Ian Proctor for him to teach his children to sail in. Then 38 years old, he had begun designing dinghies in the early 1950s, and had already produced several very successful National 12 and Merlin Rockets.

The *Jolly Roger*, as his children's new dinghy was known, attracted much interest, so Proctor decided to launch it as the Gull class, aimed at those who wanted a general purpose dinghy. Its versatility as a dinghy suitable for teaching beginners to sail, and for racing and cruising in, proved particularly attractive, as did the fact that there were two mast positions, which allowed it to be sailed with a crew under main and jib, or with just a main when singlehanding. Rowlocks and an outboard could also be fitted, which further widened its appeal.

The Mk I Gull was launched that year, available as a kitboat by Small Craft (Blockley). Built of plywood, double-chine, construction was simple and well within the capability of most amateur boatbuilders. It had a simple centreboard, and was rigged with a gunter main and jib, setting a modest 70sqft (21m²) of sail, which was popular because all the spars could be stowed within the hull when the boat was towed behind a car.

In 1966 modern boatbuilding techniques entered the class, and a GRP Mk I was introduced. It proved tricky to build, being an identical copy of the plywood version, so the Mk II Gull was launched, and sold alongside the wooden Mk I kits.

The Mk II, which was built solely in GRP, differed from its predecessor in that it had no foredeck, although it still featured built-in buoyancy tanks in the bow and stern. A removable canvas cover was offered as an alternative to the foredeck, but it never really caught on. Although by 1970 1,600 Gulls had been built, the new design did not prove popular and only about 100 were Mk IIs.



VANESSA BIRD

The following year, 1971, saw the appearance of the Mk III Gull and the most radical changes to the class ever made. The double chine of the original dinghy was replaced with a round-bilged hull, and an increase in beam from 4ft 3in to 4ft 9in (1.3-1.5m) meant significant changes had to be made to the interior layout, too. The temporary canvas foredeck of the Mk II was replaced with a fixed foredeck, which increased buoyancy, and sidedecks were introduced to make sitting out more comfortable. The option of two mast positions was, however, removed, although it was later reinstated in the second version of the Mk III.

The Mk III was the last to be launched until the 1990s, when Joan Palmer, secretary of the Gull class, contacted Proctor with a request that he relaunch the design with its original double-chine hull. Proctor died before anything came of this, but following agreement from the Proctor Partnership, Anglo Marine Services relaunched the dinghy as the GRP Gull Spirit.

Since then, a simplified version, the Gull Calypso, has been launched by Hartley Boats, and the class has continued to prove its versatility, being popular with sailing schools, club racers and dinghy cruisers alike.

GULL

LOA
11ft
(3.3m)

LWL
10ft 4in
(3.1m)

BEAM
4ft 9ins
(1.5m)

DRAUGHT
8in/3ft
(20cm/
90cm)

SAIL AREA
70sqft
(6.5m²)

DESIGNER
Ian
Proctor

MARGARET DYE

In the 1950s Margaret Dye owned a Mk I Gull, built by boatbuilder Jack Chippendale. Margaret and Jack later cruised the Gull around Scotland. She was also one of the first people to test the prototype Gull Spirit. She wrote: "I rediscovered my sailing freedom with her, in that I could launch and recover and sail her in most conditions."

RYA APPROVED

The Gull was the first class to achieve RYA Approved Class status, and was awarded the accolade in January 1963.

CAPACIOUS

The Gull may only be 11ft LOA, but it has plenty of stowage room. The stern locker on a Gull Spirit is large enough to house a folding bicycle! And in the 1958 *Dinghy Year Book*: "Perhaps the most striking feature is her carrying capacity: an absence of sidedecking allows room for eight aboard without overcrowding, when an outboard engine is used, or six when rowing and four when sailing."

COST

In 1966 a Gull in kit form cost £87 7s 6d and a complete boat £157 10s 0d. Today, a new GRP Hartley Boats-built Calypso costs £4,995. Second-hand boats can be picked up for as little as £300, but most wooden boats were amateur-built, so check condition carefully, as quality of construction varies considerably.

www.gullclassassociation.co.uk,
www.gulldinghy.org.uk



Getting afloat

RIVA

Restored Sibbick cruising yacht

Charles Sibbick did not just build raters (p46). *Riva* is a lovely example of a Sibbick cruising yacht, built in 1898 and recently restored. Her survival is “almost certainly due to the use of greenheart planking, an almost indestructible wood”, according to her broker Peter Gregson. She has five berths with full headroom, separate heads and cabin heating. This is a fast boat and manageable, though “not for the faint-hearted” adds Peter. At 39ft (11.9m), she could be a lot of things to a lot of people – a family yacht for instance. Lying: Dartmouth, Devon, asking £53,000.

Tel: +44 (0)1803 833899
www.woodenships.co.uk



EZRA

Charter pilot cutter for sale

Here's a chance to own a Luke Powell (Working Sail) Scillonian pilot cutter without waiting two years for him to build it. *Ezra*, the fifth of Luke's hand-built vessels, is on the market. Built in 2006 (CB217) she has operated as a charter boat off the west Scottish coast.

She's 44ft (13.4m) on deck and carries the usual pilot cutter advantages of great accommodation, solidity and seaworthiness as well as all the equipment required by the MCA for charter work – so you could own her as a private yacht or as a charter business. She's asking £265,000 and lying in northwest Scotland.

www.sailezra.co.uk or phone Sam Brooke on +44 (0)7775 953252.

BILLY BLUE

Syndicate shares in a Hillyard

Billy Blue is a pre-war Hillyard yacht, recently restored and now looking for a new member to join her five-man syndicate based at Newhaven Marina. Maintenance is mainly carried out by one of the team, carpenter by trade and boatbuilder at heart, so this is a good way to enjoy wooden boat ownership with a fraction of the hassle and expense (about £80 per month).

The fifth-share is going at £3,000, considerably under market value, and another of the five shares may be available for the same price. The yacht herself is a very original 1932 nine-tonner by David Hillyard, in pitch pine on oak, with aft-cockpit layout, four berths, a good level of equipment and a great rig that belies the Hillyard reputation for sluggishness. Itinerary is flexible, with sociable all-syndicate sailing and plenty of bareboat availability.

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EZRA

Ezra is the fifth of Luke Powell's legendary Isles of Scilly pilot cutters. After her launch in 2006 she went straight to work as a charter boat in NW Scotland. Ezra has proved to be an extremely seaworthy and safe boat working in all conditions as well as being a successful business. Ezra is 44' on deck, 60' overall and is constructed of larch on oak with opepe deck & backbone and solid douglas & canadian fir spars. Ezra is for sale either for private use or as a business and is priced at £265,000. Lying NW Scotland.

Further pictures & general information can be seen on Ezra's website at www.sallezra.co.uk.

For a detailed specification contact Sam Brooke at skippers@sallezra.co.uk or 07775-953252.



BALI, INDONESIA

Wooden Gaff Cutter (Ironwood and Teak), built 2007. Length 11m (36ft) on deck plus bowsprit 3.50m, beam 3.50m, draught 1.80m, 2 cabins, new sails, Mitsubishi engine 110hp, new Zodiac dinghy,

PRICE £114,000

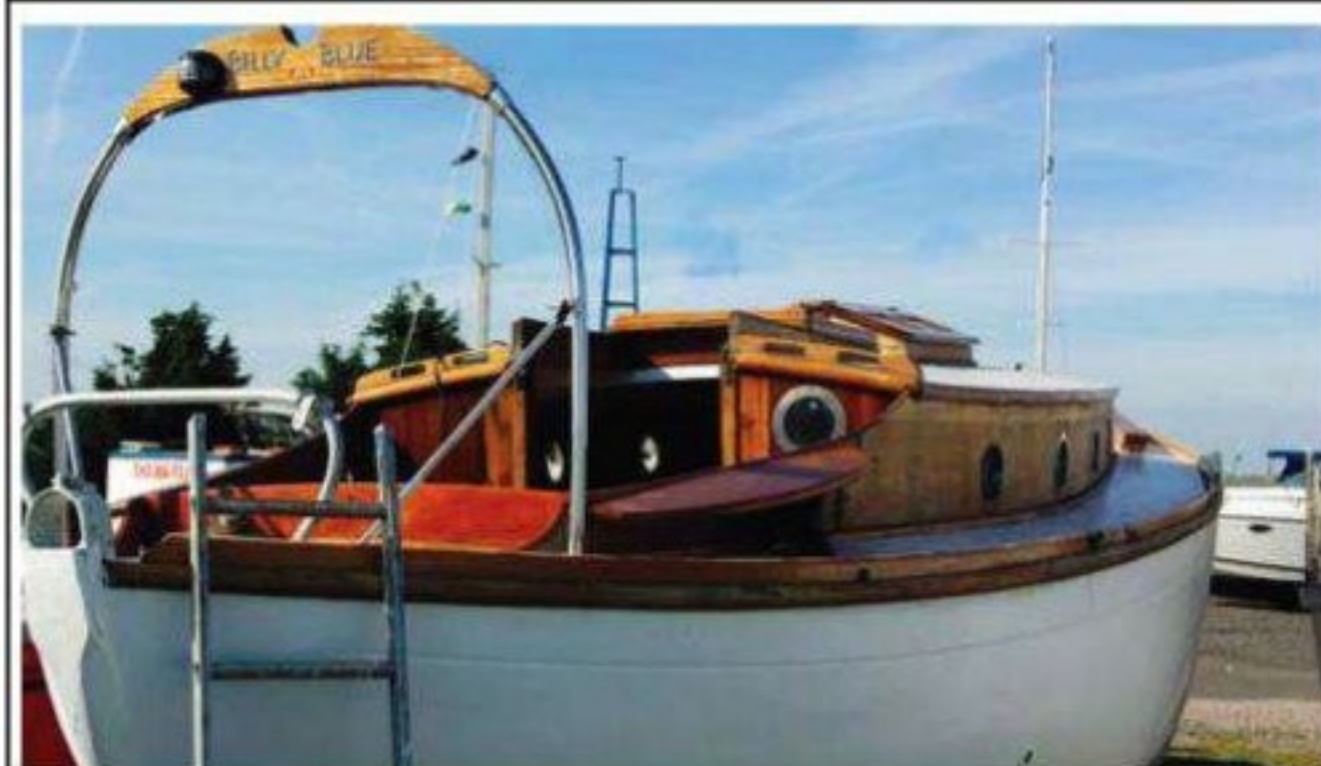
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Location: Ashore, Essex

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72 ft Norwegian Pilot House Ketch 1936

Testimony to the longevity of Norwegian design, construction, and the superb qualities of Kauri, with copper and bronze fastenings, RANUI has had just 4 owners including the NZ Government in a long and illustrious life. Her scantlings are heavy, designed for and operated in New Zealand stormy Southern Ocean waters – now as an expedition ship she has once again proven her design and husky credentials. An extremely safe sturdy and sea kindly vessel with a 3000 mile range under power.

£550,000 VAT unpaid

Lying New Zealand



45 ft Bristol Pilot Cutter Replica 2007

Conceived as a replica of the pilot cutter PEGGY, built in 1904 by Rowles of Pili, POLLY AGATHA has all the charm of a classic Edwardian cutter but with a luxurious modern interior and equipped with modern technology. Her ample deck space and accommodation fit her for a variety of roles including charter and sea school use but her finish and detail befits that of a vintage yacht – and places her a long way from her work boat roots. She has 10 berths including a luxuriously appointed master cabin.

£500,000 VAT unpaid Lying UK



50 ft Bombigher Schooner 1982

Daniel Bombigher designed schooners for long voyages: the hull shape, deck layout, rig sail plan and internal layout make them real marine homes yet the small draught giving easy access to estuaries and rivers. HOLLANDER is in remarkable condition thanks to an owner who has maintained meticulously every last detail and equipped her to go anywhere. Schooner rigged; her dimensions and layout enable comfortable family living on an extended cruise but with very easy handling.

€380,000

Lying Denmark



48 ft Sibbick Yawl 1900

A design by Charles Sibbick from 1900, SAUNTERER's understated beauty and simple elegance could easily hide the fact that she is an extremely seaworthy, fast and very English vintage yacht. SAUNTERER has benefited from substantial refits undertaken by people who know and understand this vessel; thus leaving her ready to be enjoyed by her next owner – her previous owners include Captain Oates of Antarctic fame.

£205,000

Lying UK

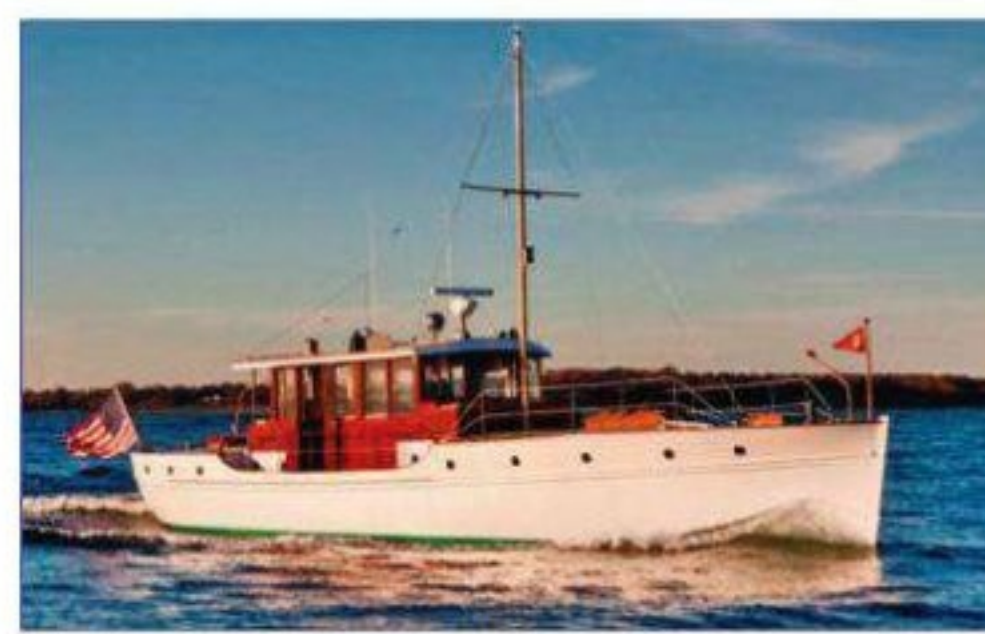


50 ft Fred Shepherd Yawl 1939

Fred Shepherd designed yachts were renowned not only for their great beauty but more spacious accommodation than could be had in most boats of the 1930s – and perfectly demonstrated in this case. In his book 'Oyster River' George Millar gives a wonderful account of his short-tacking AMOKURA with ease up the narrow tidal channels and rivers of Morbihan in the 1960s – she has moreover been maintained in beautiful condition with appropriate refits and updates ranging from bronze floors and refastening, all of which are well documented.

£245,000

Lying France



59 ft Lawley Motor Yacht 1918

Fred Lawley's yachts are noted for combining a careful attention to the detail of materials and sound methods of construction – they were much admired for their beauty of line, excellence of finish, sea going qualities and comfort. CARINA, formerly OLD GLORY with her stunning lines culminating in a canoe stern is no exception; her interior is simple and largely original. It is evident that CARINA has had significant upgrading in recent years, raising the bar, both structurally and cosmetically to her original glory..

\$385,000 USD VAT unpaid

Lying USA



55 ft Stephens Bros Bridge Deck Motor Yacht 1932

In 2008 and 2009 SEA DOG won several 'best in show' awards at festivals and boat shows in the Puget Sound region, including the Victoria Classic Boat Festival. She has since retired from competition, but is a favourite at regional festivals. SEA DOG is in impressive condition throughout, and kept in her own covered boatshed. She is a marvellous evocation of stateliness and style yet equipped for modern times – a rare beauty.

\$415,000 USD VAT unpaid Lying USA



40 ft John Bain Staniland Motor Yacht 1963

John Bain was a pioneer of British motor boating; his designs were elegant and seemingly timeless – often exceptionally built from the finest materials resulting in capable and very seaworthy vessels. JANICK was originally built to Lloyds 100 A1 and although recently restored, her pitch pine planking is all original. Above all her layout provides a deck saloon many modern yachts simply do not offer – as well as spacious cabins and two separate heads. Restored by a yachtsman used to cruising, her inventory reflects this.

£115,000

Lying UK



40 ft G L Watson Spey Class Motor Sailer 1965

SPEY BEAM was the last 40 foot Spey class motor sailer of the original design by G L Watson & Co of Glasgow. She has had an extensive refit and has enjoyed almost continuous use. She can sleep 7 people in comfort with 2 heads and a shower – consuming only ½ a gallon per hour at cruising speed she has a range of up to 1,600 miles. It would be easy for a yacht of this style and these dimensions to seem clumsy, yet the designer has succeeded in creating a very handsome vessel as much at home in the wilder waters of the Scottish West Coast as she could be in a French canal or the Med.

£99,000

Lying UK

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78ft Steel Barge, 1924

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17m Risor Motor Ketch, 1935

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38ft Alden Yawl, 1962

A "Challenger" class GRP distance cruiser with drop plate. Teak decks. Scotland £48,000



16.5m Gaff Cutter, 1921

Well found. Twin Beta engs. Accom 14. Dunkirk Little Ship. Essex £125,000



39ft Sibbicks of Cowes, 1898

Gaff cutter. Greenheart. 5 berths. Full restoration. Dartmouth £53,000



36ft Harrison Butler Cutter, 1934

A vessel of substance, a passage maker. 3 cabins. Suffolk £42,000



9.6m J. Francis Jones Sloop, 1963

Percy See built. Tantina Class. Wonderfully kept. 4 berths. Bukh. N.Ireland £37,500



11m Essex Sailing Smack, 1850's

MN17. New deck. Simple small accom. Kept as sail only. Good turn of speed. Essex £35,000



30ft Rively Motor Yacht, 1961

Built by Fox's. 2 x Merc engs. Sleeps 4. Immaculately presented. Kent £28,500



11m Ocean 36, 1950

Bermudan cutter, long keel, 65hp engine. Varnished interior, 6ft hdm, 5 berths. Sussex £25,000 ono



9m Wanderer, 1985

Last wooden to be built. 20hp Bukh eng. Iroko hull. Good pedigree. 5 berths. Sussex £34,950 Partex considered



9.75m Crossfield's "Nobby", 1922

Rebuilt, gaff rig, BMC eng. Accom 3. Traditional ex fishing boat. Shallow draft. Ellesmere £25,000



26ft Tumlare, 1938

Knud Reimers. Rebuilt 2001. Oregon pine copper fastened on oak. Simple accom. Slippery long keel. Classic day racer. Cornwall £9,950



22ft Deben 4 Tonner, 1938

Pocket Cruiser of Whisstocks. In excellent order. New charcoal stove, hull refitted '10. Cornwall £7,950



26ft Vertue V22, 1947

Built Newmans of Poole. Recent sails & eng. In good order. Sussex £21,000



Stirling 28, 1961

Holman design. No expense spared on her renovation. A wonderful example, Classic Regattas. Hants £24,500



8.8m Gaff Cutter, 1937

One off by Stone's, Brightligsea. 2 berths. New spars and rig 2011. Outboard. Very well kept. Essex £10,000



26ft SCOD, 1965

Long term ownership. Original layout and gear. Full suit of sail. Albin Petrol eng. Hants £9,500



29ft Laurent Giles Sloop, 1965

Mashford's built. Restored & sailing. Mooring in Brittany. 4 berths. Yanmar eng. Brest £22,000



6.5m Gaff Cutter, CK158, 1933

Commissioned for wild fowling. Dan Webb's built. 2 berths. Essex £13,500



26ft Upham's Waterbug, 1954

Pitch pine on Oak, long keel(legs). Thornycroft eng. Semi wheel house shelter. Fractional sloop. Good headrm. Four berths in 2 cabins. Kent £7,950

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43' Camper and Nicholson sloop. 1960. One of 5 similar cruiser/racer yachts design and built by C&N in the 1960s. Honduras mahogany hull. Lead keel. New bottom in 1999. New solid teak deck 2003. Alloy mast, new rigging 2009. Volvo 50hp diesel. 8 berths. **Devon. Exceptional value at £115,000**



52' Fleur de Lys motor yacht. Lloyds 100A1 1965. Iroko hull and deck. Twin Gardner 51W 98hp diesels. Diesel generator. 5 berths in 3 sleeping cabins. Deep pile carpets in the saloon. New galley. Hot showers. Stabilisers and all the gear you want. She is wonderful and very good value at **£125,000 UK**



55' Bermudan Yawl. John Alden design, built in the USA in 1930. Major rebuild in the UK in last 2 years. New deck, floors, frames, rig by Collars, interior. Yanmar diesel. 6 berths. Executor sale hence exceptional buy at **£125,000. UK**



33' Miller Pifer. The most popular model in the range of motor sailers designed and built by Millers of Fife, Scotland based on the famously sea-worthy Scottish fishing boat, Larch and mahogany hull, fine teak deck. Bermudan ketch rig. Lister Blackstone 36hp. 4 berths in wonderful varnished mahogany cabin. A very smart little ship, go anywhere, live aboard cruising. **Essex £35,000**



Holman 28. A larger sister to the Holman Sterling, built 1962. Larch planking, ply deck, ally mast, new Nanni diesel. 5 berths, separate heads, head-room all through. Almost the ideal small, economical cruising yacht for most people. **Only £15,000 Kent**



35' Rummer Yawl, built by Whistocks, 1958 for designer Kim Holman. Pitch-pine hull, iron keel, sheathed ply deck, varnished teak coach-roof and cock-pit. Varnished masts. 2005 diesel. 4 berths. Extensive upgrading in present long ownership. If you want to be sure, buy the yacht the famous man designed for himself! **Suffolk £30,000**



33' McGruer sloop, 1937. Pitch-pine hull, teak deck, coach-roof and cock-pit. Fractional rig on aluminium mast. Good sails. Yanmar 18hp diesel. 4 berths. A very nice yacht indeed, pretty, sound and fast. **Holland £35,500**



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Iroko, mahogany joinery. Four berths. Twin 48hp Perkins diesels.
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KLOPPE. 29ft.9ins. Wanderer Class Bermudian Sloop
Laurent Giles / Elkins 1965. Teak. Four berths. 23hp Vetus diesel.
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CHARLES ASHLEY. 47ft. Watson Class RNLI Lifeboat
Samuel White, Cowes 1949. Mahogany. Four berths. Twin 110hp Ford
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Maurice Griffiths / Rossiter 1972. Iroko / Teak. Seven berths, 50hp Beta
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MARIE LOUISE. 28ft. Hillyard Gaff Cutter 1926
Pitch pine, mahogany joinery. Four berths. 30hp Yanmar diesel.
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Bickfords of Topsham 1965. Mahogany. Three berths. 10hp Yanmar
diesel. Good inventory. \$6,250 Cornwall



KINGFISHER. 21ft. 6ins. Cyclone Gaff Yawl
Harrison Butler/Waity of Fowey 1926. Pitch pine / teak. Two berths.
10hp Yanmar. Rare THB Tabloid. \$7,500 Cornwall



ALVINA. 29ft. 6ins. Mustang Class CB Sloop
Elkins of Christchurch 1967. Iroko/mahogany. Four berths. 35hp Perkins
diesel. Shoal draught cruiser. \$29,500 Somerset

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On course for success

Launch Day at the Lyme Regis Boat Building Academy; *Nigel Sharp* went to meet the craftspeople of the future



MARTIN NOTT



JENNY STEER

LAURENCE MADILL

Above left: Fiona Molloy, in blue, launches her Tammie Norrie with help from BBA graduate Gail McGarva
Left: Champagne moment for Chris Smith (stern) with girlfriend Colleen and dog Cally

Everyone hopes for good weather on launch day. But for the students of the Boatbuilding Academy at Lyme Regis, the forecast for the first Tuesday in June seemed to take on a particular importance. Twelve of them had – as part of the course and with the help of all the other students on the course – built boats for themselves, and were due to launch them that morning.

During the first three weeks of the nine-month course, group discussions take place – led by the Academy's principal Yvonne Green and her staff – regarding the boats the students would like to build. The Academy operates a rota system to ensure that all students get a chance to work on every boat. However, any of them can opt out of the rota if they feel they would prefer to concentrate on their own project.

The aim is that the boats should represent a variety of types, materials and construction methods. And the students themselves – many of them 'mature' – add to that variety with their vastly differing backgrounds and previous careers. Three months into the course, after the students have completed various tasks to learn a range of boatbuilding skills, work on the boats begins. Launch Day is already on the calendar and the pressure is on.

"We try to teach them a sense of timely working and that's the idea of Launch Day," Yvonne explained.

The largest boat this year was Martin Nott's Charles Sibbick-designed Victorian Half-Rater at just under 21ft (6.4m) LOA (see p36). She needed Martin's full attention, as well as that of fellow student Alistair Munro.



NIGEL SHARP

Another who opted out of the rota was former property developer Gary Thompson, who wanted a 'stable family daysailer' and chose to build a Haven 12½ – originally a Nat Herreshoff design, reconfigured with a centreboard, a shallower keel and bermudan rig by Joel White in 1987, and now re-created in GRP and foam.

By contrast, Jim Little (an ex-marketing man) decided to build a GRP rowing boat designed by course tutor Justin Adkin. This was much less demanding in terms of man-hours, which meant that it was possible to build the whole boat in the last five weeks before Launch Day. "I'm really glad to have had the experience of working on all the other boats and to have built my own as well," Jim told me.

PROGRESS REVIEW

A couple of times a week throughout the build process there is a 'boat round' which enables the students and tutors to review progress and discuss what needs doing next. This involves every student and gives them an appreciation of the importance of planning.

A week before Launch Day the situation was very similar to how it would be in a real boatyard – there was still a daunting amount to do on most of the boats! Many of the students – including non-boat owners – were working very long hours. But there was a very positive charge to the atmosphere with discussions about how much painting and varnishing was still needed, for instance – on most of the boats drying times determined that it was no longer an option to miss any opportunity to apply a coat of something.

The big day arrived and the weather wasn't great, but on a positive note the early morning strong winds had eased a bit, and the occasional showers had started to give way to sunny periods. The boats were paraded in line from the Academy's workshop the few hundred yards to Lyme Regis harbour where they were then launched one at a time to the sound of great acclamation from the three hundred-or-so onlookers.

The first cheers were for Ollie Rees's 10ft (3m) traditional clinker dinghy *Wally*. Ollie (formerly a chef and guitar teacher) and fellow student Tim Herman set the celebratory tone for the remaining launches when the champagne was opened and the boat was toasted.

Another clenched clinker boat followed – a 14ft (4.3m) German lake boat to a century-old design built by Uli Killer, who had previously run a property development company with "a stressful number of employees" in Munich. His wife and daughter had come over from Germany especially for the occasion and they must have been delighted to see the expression of joy on his face as he began to put the oars and bronze rowlocks – specially made for him by Classic Marine to a 1900 design – to good use.

Then it was the turn of Chris Smith and his 14ft (4.3m) Selway Fisher strip-planked Canadian sailing canoe. "I wanted a boat big enough for two people and a dog," he had told me, and that seemed to be the case – just! Another canoe followed when Dan Stone (a former occupational therapist) launched his Iain Oughtred-designed *Wee Rob* and paddled away with a smile that said it all.

Above: Sean Quail's YW Dayboat and Chris Smith's Selway Fisher strip-plank canoe in the workshop a week before Launch Day

“The core of the course is to send people out into the industry”



PHOTOS BY NIGEL SHARP

Top left: Gary fitting coamings to *Lashanna*
Top right: Uli's German lake boat
Above left: Hannah's outrigger canoe
Above right: Dan's *Wee Rob* – all a week before Launch Day

Hannah Jenkins was particularly worried about the wind. “I’ve sailed all my life but I just don’t know what this boat will sail like” she told me. “I’m nervous and excited at the same time!” Her outrigger canoe *Olive* was based on a 1,000-year-old Polynesian design.

Next in was Jim Little’s rowing boat, quickly followed by Tom Sargison’s 16ft (4.9m) Cayman Catboat *Firefly*. James Higson (former industrial product designer and financial adviser) then launched *Alessi* – his 12ft (3.7m) Paul Gartside-designed standing lugsail traditional clinker dinghy. Another clinker boat followed – of glued plywood construction – a Tammie Norrie yawl built by former management accountant Fiona Molloy.

SETTING SAILS

Up to now, no-one had dared to put up a sail – but that was about to change. Encouraged by experienced sailor Justin, Sean Quail’s Yachting World Dayboat was launched with the sails already up. As soon as the crew climbed aboard, the boat raced out of the harbour into Lyme Bay. This, and the fact that the wind had moderated a little, encouraged others to follow. Hannah paddled out of the harbour and set her small bright blue sail and Chris hoisted his “Mylar scrim and Kevlar yarn” sail to the top of his Canadian canoe’s carbon fibre mast.

Ten boats afloat and two still to go – but the Half-Rater and the Haven 12½ needed to be launched by a boat lift, and the harbourmaster decided it was still too windy to do so. So Martin and Gary put on a brave face as they stood next to their boats watching their fellow students enjoy themselves on the water. Gary, who had

only had a total of 5 hours sleep in the previous three nights, was very philosophical about it. The name of his boat – *Lashanna*, which is Irish for “wisdom which comes with age” – seemed poignant.

As it was also graduation day all the students were given their City and Guilds and Academy certificates. During the presentation, Tim Gedge, who founded the Academy in 1997, referred to the number of boats that had been built. “Some would say we bit off a bit more than we could chew but by golly you’ve achieved it.”

As the students disbanded over the following days – some via the Beale Park Boat Show where they displayed their boats on the Academy’s own stand – some had finalised their plans for the future. Gary, for instance, was starting work at Wessex Resins; Uli was going back to Germany to start a one-man boatbuilding and restoration business on the shores of Lake Tegernsee; Hannah didn’t mind what she did, or where, as long as it involved woodworking; Jim is building the Adkin dinghy commercially as the Fox 14; James is working at Henwood and Dean, and Chris is doing a marine-based MA in Southampton.

“The core of the course is to send people out into the industry,” explained Yvonne. Tom Richardson of the Elephant Boatyard, who employs two previous graduates, attended Launch Day and commented: “The college has set the benchmark for the future of training craftsmen which has long been the biggest worry of traditional boatbuilders and repairers.”



CHARLOTTE WATERS

Now where did I put it?

Adrian lists some of the ancient laws of boatbuilding

So, what have I learned, in ten years of building dinghies? Well, there's not a lot of money in it, unless you give me a tenner for every time someone said: "Suppose there's not a lot of money in it..." – a remark usually followed by some romantic tosh about doing it more for "the love of wood, keeping the old traditions alive, etc etc..."

There is, I admit, something satisfying, albeit idiosyncratic, about building small boats in such an archaic manner, using many small pieces of timber. Often have I wondered why it wouldn't be easier and more sensible to glue together ready-planed planks cut from a few 8 x 4ft slabs of laminated veneer. Has anyone tried?

And on a good day, when the hammer's at hand, the pencil is behind the ear, the planer blade is keen and all's well with the world, life is indeed rosy down at the cow shed, by the side of Loch Broom.

Now Radio 2 often takes the place of Radio 3 (the classic one), as I am not alone. Dan's building a 34ft schooner, and John's revitalising his steel sloop, which means there's company and the occasional mug of coffee whereas before I would likely see let alone speak to no one all day (apart from one-sided conversations with the livestock, viz swearing at the hens in summer, and turkeys in the run-up to Christmas).



In similar vein, those Day-Glo tapes designed to stand out among all the other clutter on your work bench become invisible after a while, just like those men in reflective jackets you (don't) see in the streets fixing stuff.

Mark Stockl taught me this one: although you think it's not strong enough, it probably is, but for peace of mind make it stronger. Someone may be trusting their life to it.

Just as no one chipped your new planer knife, no one has stolen your tape/pencil/rule/yard brush. You've lost it all by yourself, and if you do accuse anyone you'll only have to apologise later.

Wood moves, which is why it is so satisfying and frustrating to work, often in equal measures, sometimes on the same piece of wood, especially one in which the grain goes one way at one end, and the other way at the other (like most planks in fact).

A knowledge of maths helps, by which I mean the ability to count. For example if you want to achieve an identical chamfer in two pieces of wood, count the plane passes. Works for anything.

And finally, the pencil is more often not behind your ear. It fell off and you've just stepped on it and, inevitably, broken the lead.

"You will find your ear defenders if you stop looking for them"

MILLBROOK CORNWALL

Replica Grayhound takes shape

Down at Millbrook on Cornwall's Rame Peninsula, the remarkable *Grayhound* has already taken shape. A replica of a 1776 revenue lugger (Yard News, CB271), she's the brainchild of Marcus Rowden and Freya Hart, conceived, apparently, in a bar in the Azores. "We wanted to set up a charter business, using a traditional boat of some size," explains Marcus. "Initially we were going to look for a boat to restore – then we saw *La Cancalaïse* and said to each other: 'Why don't we build a big lugger?' Building new resolves many of the coding issues that a charter boat faces."

It was Chris Rees, who built Pete Goss's *Spirit of Mystery*, who introduced them to the plans of *Grayhound* – "slippery, speedy, and with cannons" – given to him by Paul Greenwood of Looe Lugger Regatta fame. Chris is now head shipwright on *Grayhound*.

After a couple of months of thinking, building began last October with the cutting-down of trees – oak from the Rowden family's land and Douglas fir from Holden Forest. Larch left over from the *Pilgrim* restoration was provided by Ashley Butler.



GRAYHOUND PROJECT



PETER WILLIS

Above: *Grayhound*:
"Why don't we build
a big lugger?"

**Left: Chris Rees also
builds these neat GRP
mini-gigs. Ideal for
juniors, training or
just for leisure, they
can be rowed by from
one to four people
and cost £2,800,
including oars.**

A keel-laying party this summer attracted over 300 visitors, and framing started on 1 August. The 63ft (19.2m) lugger is being held together in the traditional way, with wooden treenails, fashioned on site.

Her launch date is already scheduled for high water next September, with fit-out over the following winter to be ready for the UK season in 2013. She'll also sail to the Caribbean.

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BUTLERS WOODEN BOATS

New Mayflower, old Pilgrim

A little further east, on the River Dart, another yard that specializes in 'new old' boats has been busy too. Ashley Butler of Butlers Wooden Boats launched the 50ft (15m) version of his Mayflower type (*far left*), the first of which, at 28ft (8.5m), was shown on our stand at the London Boat Show in 2009. Another large recent project was the restoration and launch of the Brixham trawler *Pilgrim*, and Ashley has just started on the restoration of the Brixham sailing trawler *Charmin*.

ROD COVENEY



WILL STIRLING

PLYMOUTH

Stirling at the Pole, on TV... and completing Integrity

Will Stirling of Stirling and Son near Plymouth, has had a busy year, skippering the support ship that accompanied Scottish explorer Jock Wishart's record-breaking Row to the North Pole (they got there on 31 August), then taking part in a series for Channel 4 on sailing, playing the part of the befuddled traditionalist who is taken out on an AC45 America's Cup catamaran ("Masts

used to be wooden – I suppose they're terribly high-tech these days – probably aluminium.").

He's somehow found time to do a bit of boatbuilding as well: seven new traditional clinker dinghies (with two more on the order books this winter) and – the big boat in the shed – his brand new 43ft (13.1m) Victorian cutter *Integrity* (her lines were in CB272). Built on spec, she's for sale

Will Stirling's
Integrity, on offer
(completed) for
£297,000

at £297,000 (+VAT). The planking went on in summer and, with the hull complete, Will's winter projects are the interior, engine and systems.

The design, by Will, pays close reference to classic Victorian gaff-rigged yachts like *Marigold* (Charles Nicholson), *Partridge* (Beavor-Webb), *Vandura* (Watson), *Zoraida* (Dixon Kemp) and *Bloodhound* (Wm Fife III).



PETER WILLIS

GWEEK QUAY

Luke Powell decks Freya and lines up Vincent

Yard News dropped in to Gweek Quay to see Luke Powell and find out how his latest pilot cutter, the 42ft (12.8m) *Freya*, is coming along. As you can see, she's decked and fitting-out has begun, with a launch date of next April. *Freya's* being built for private owners, two Swedish doctors who work in New Zealand during the UK winter, and plan to live aboard and explore the Celtic coast during the summer.

Meanwhile, Luke has lined up his next project, a 63-footer (19.2m) replica of a Falmouth pilot cutter (not Scillonian for a change). She's based on a boat called *Vincent*, to lines, taken off a builder's mould, that were owned by Ralph Bird. She'll be easily Working Sail's biggest boat to date. Luke's starting her on spec, and looking for a buyer.

Boatbuilder's Notes



TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Riveting (or boring)

BY ADRIAN MORGAN

These are the simple tools needed to build a clinker boat. Well, you need a few more for the planking – planes, screwdrivers and suchlike – but to rivet the planks together you can do it all, singlehanded, with this little lot.

The sequence is: drill hole from the inside through the plank land; drive through nail – from the outside; place rove on nail; hold roving tool onto rove; tap nail head with

hammer, while pushing down on roving tool; once rove is flush with the plank, snip off excess copper nail. Back up nail using lump hammer on the nail head, peen cut nail over the rove using gentle, small taps, starting round the base of the nail to set the rove, before hitting the nail directly. These tools (left) have built 14 boats and repaired nearly as many. NB: here I am roving up a 3ft (90cm) cradle boat. Size up accordingly!

1 Roving implement: Mine is simply an old bottlescrew barrel.

2 Pincers: To clip off the exposed end of the nail once the rove has been driven down over it.

3 Lump hammer: This is my backing up weight. You can use anything that provides a heavy, firm, solid surface which you hold against the head of the nail.

4 Ball peen hammer: Of various weights, this one is good for the 12-gauge copper nails I customarily use on small boats. Larger nails, heavier hammer, although it is a question of lots of small taps, rather than clouting the nails, the aim being to achieve a nicely rounded, peened-over rove

5 Drill: The hole should be the diameter of the flats of the nail (not the corner) – in other words, a little tight.



6 Driving nail through land using ball peen hammer outside and claw hammer inside to stop bounce

7 Setting the rove using the flat of the ball peen hammer to drive rove down over nail (bottlescrew over rove)

8 Snipping off the excess nail

9 Peening over the nail by chasing around the rove. Finish with a few light taps on the cut nail end. Tap lightly and often directly on the nail to avoid crippling it inside the wood



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Traditional Tool



ROBIN GATES

Breast drill

BY ROBIN GATES

If progress with a hand drill proves fitful in tough materials, the job will go more smoothly with a breast drill. This is an altogether sturdier tool, larger and heavier, distinguished by its dished breast plate enabling the worker to put his body weight behind the bit. That said, the breast drill is capable of great accuracy and like all hand tools is cordless, infinitely variable in speed and with constant feedback.

Dating from the 1920s, this Millers Falls No 97, measuring 18in (46cm) overall and weighing 7¾ lb (3.5kg), is widely regarded as the Rolls-Royce of breast drills. Superbly engineered, it has a beauty in the web-like casting of its enamelled iron frame and its

“The precisely meshing wheels conjure a delight no squealing power drill can rival”

turned hardwood handles feel right. The sight and sound of its precisely meshing gear wheels conjure a delight no squealing power drill can rival.

On most breast drills the large drive gear engages with one or sometimes two pinions but here we have four, totally eliminating rattle and slippage. Moreover, the pinion assembly houses a gearbox with a knurled ring for selection of ‘plain’ forward and reverse motion, right- or left-hand ratchet motion, and right- or left-hand ‘onward’ motion.

Ratchet motion enables drilling where there is little room by pumping the crank handle back and forth, but the chuck stops turning on the back stroke. The 97’s innovative ‘onward’ motion drives the chuck on both

forward and back strokes without pause. Whereas with other breast drills the entire drive gear is removed and repositioned to change gear ratios, the 97 has a spring-mounted selector on the crank for rapid switching without interrupting the work.

When less force is required the large breast plate detaches to expose a smaller plate contoured to fit the hand, while for extra torque when ratcheting the crank handle can be mounted in-line instead of perpendicular. The forward handle unscrews to reveal a surprise – a screwdriver tip fitting the drill’s own slotted screw heads.

At around 38 shillings when new this drill was twice as expensive as its peers, but over 90 years it has proved to be worth the investment.

Above: The Millers Falls No 97 breast drill Right: Drive gear, four pinions and gearbox



ROBIN GATES

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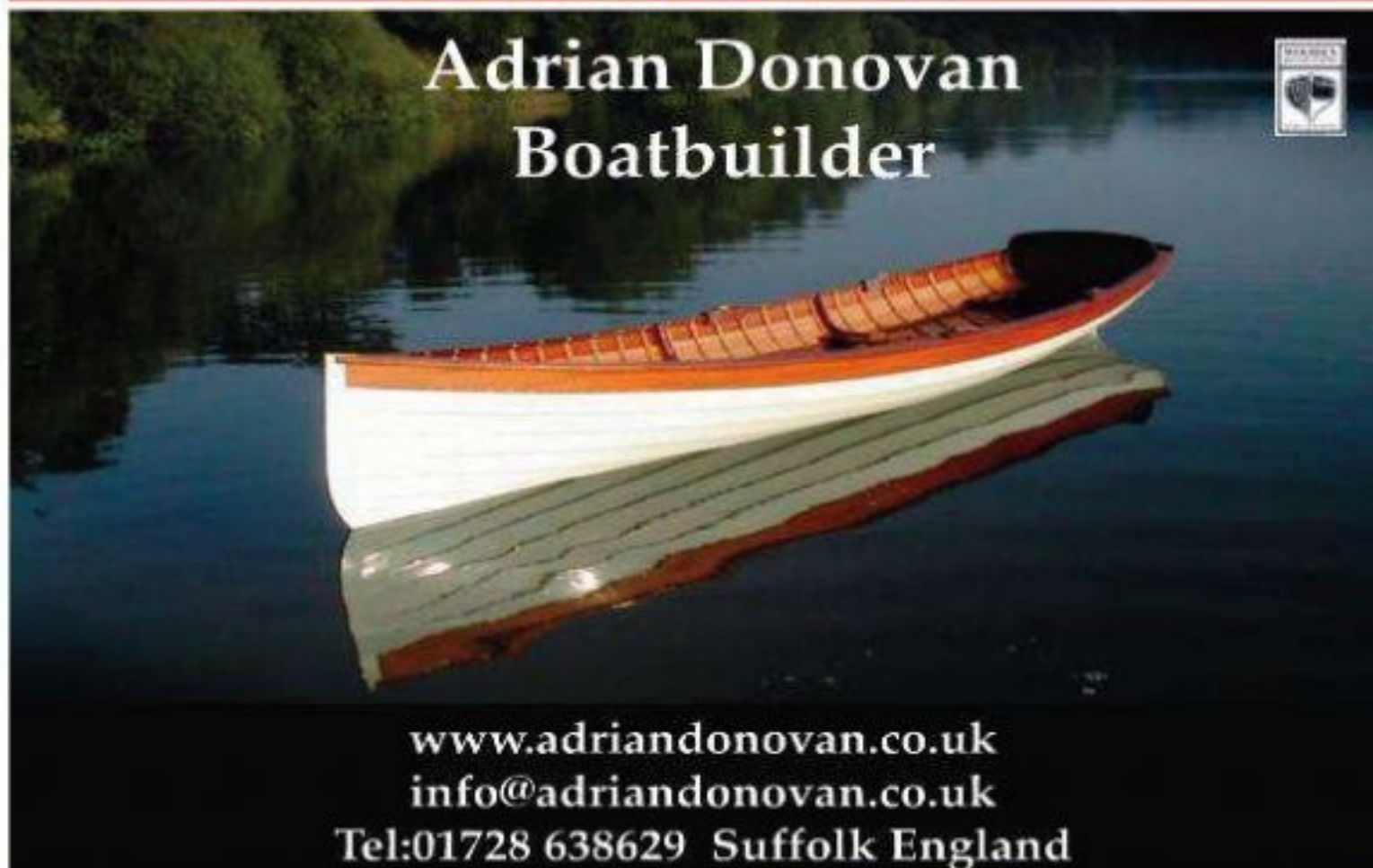
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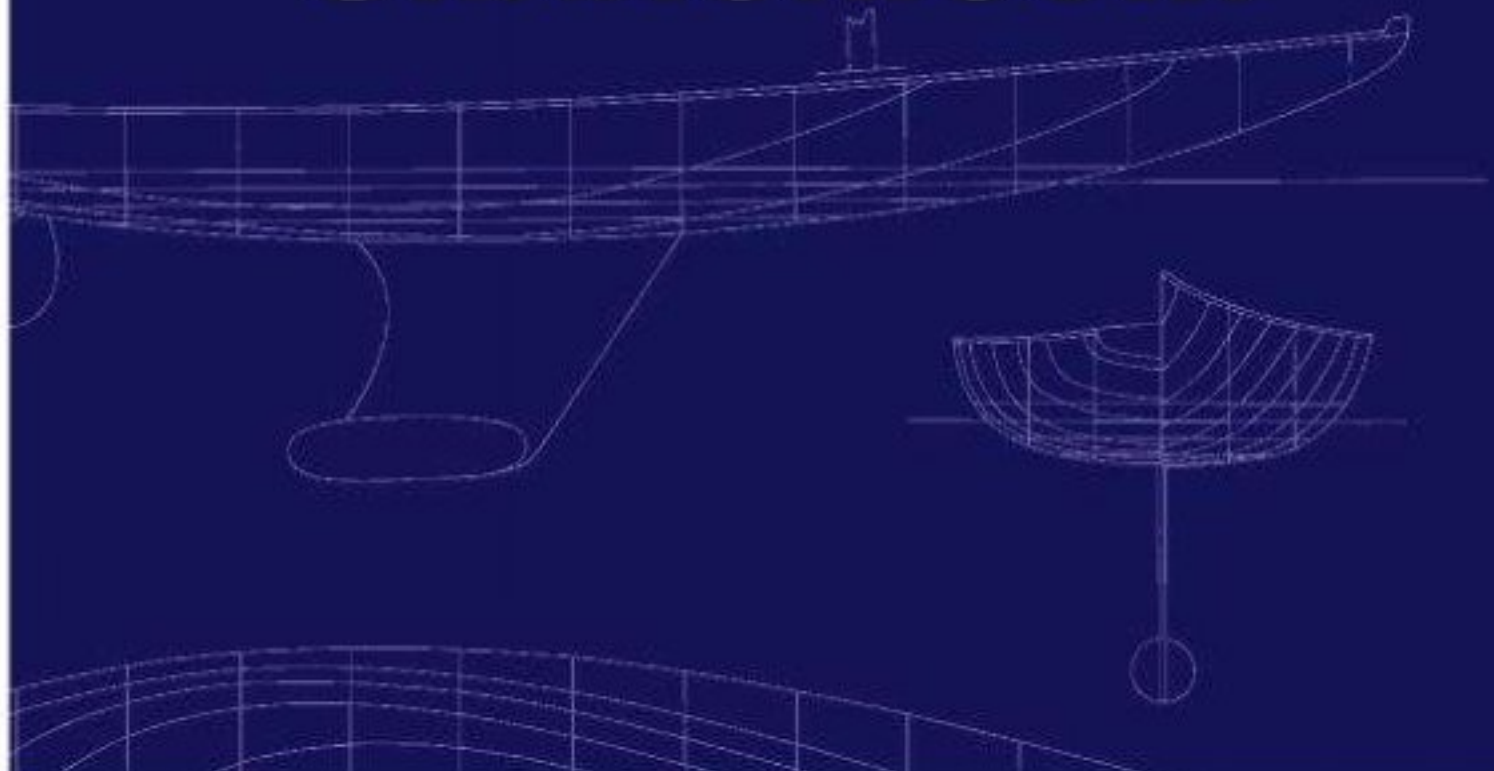
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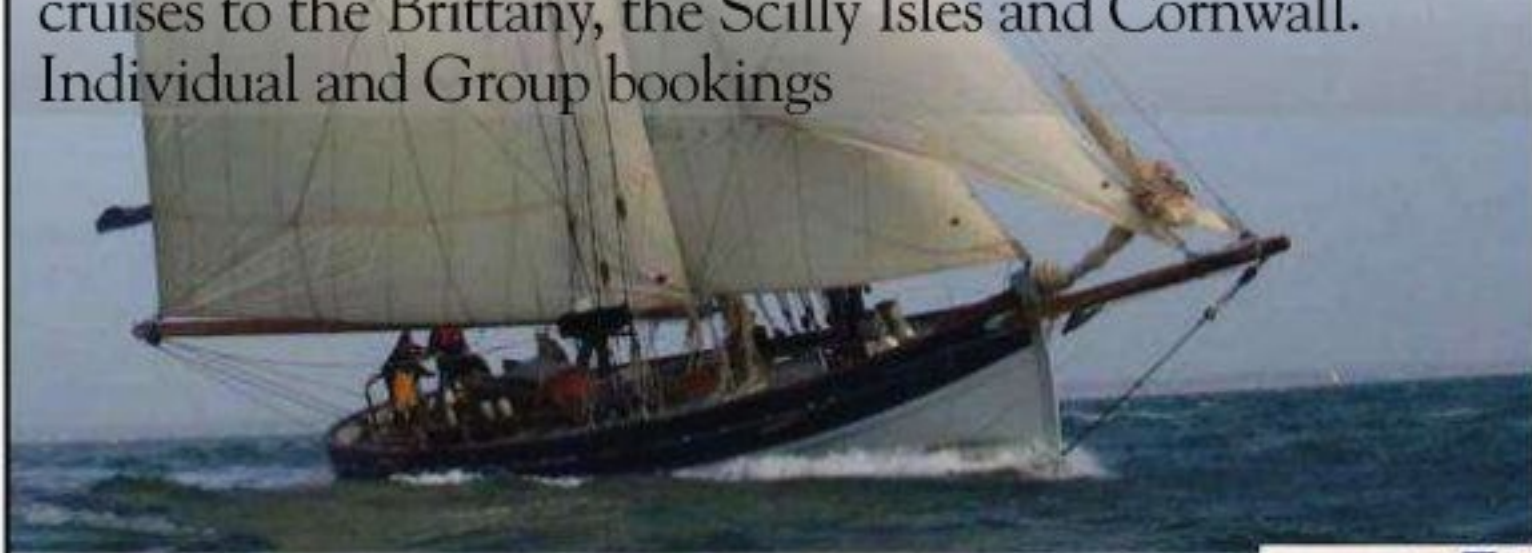


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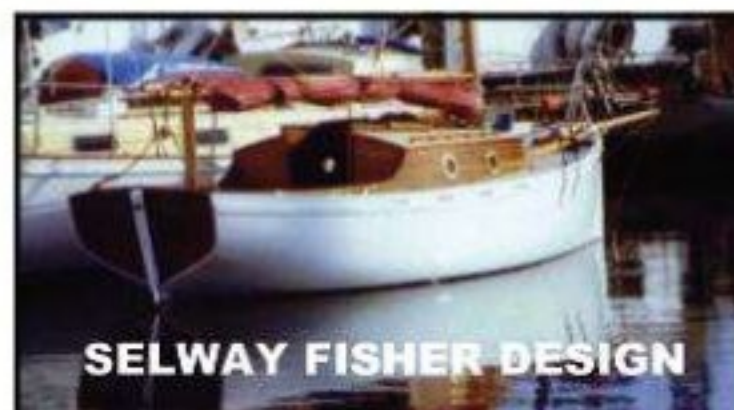
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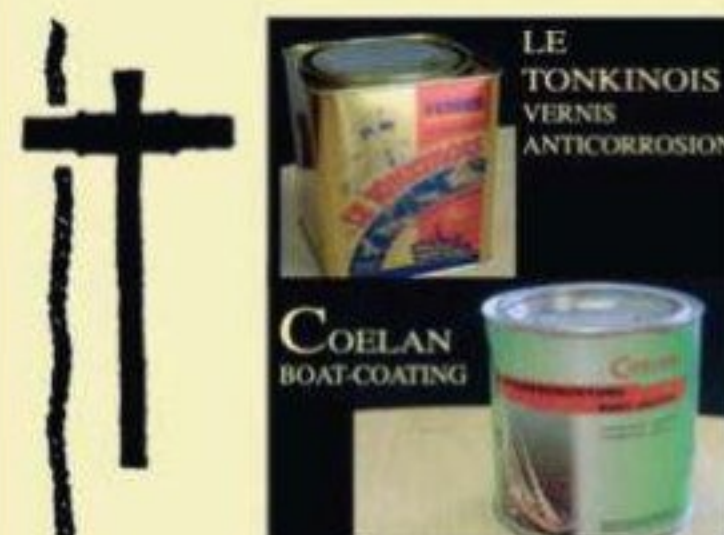
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LETTER OF THE MONTH SUPPORTED BY OLD PULTENEY WHISKY



Dragon rescued – but help needed

Several years ago I rescued a Dragon from a bonfire in Tayport, Fyfe. After some research I discovered that she was the first boat built by the late Mr Borge Børrisen in Vejle, Denmark. *Suzanne* was built as a now very

rare cruising Dragon, as can be seen by the scuttle on the cuddy. I have most of her history since 1936.

It is my hope and intention to restore her but I need a to find a shipwright to assist me to replace the keel which is rotten – the rest I can

do. I would also be happy to discuss donating her as a student project. She is an important boat and deserves a proper restoration – can anyone help please?
Mike Rasmussen, Aboyne, Aberdeenshire

Above left: Builder Borge Børrisen aboard *Suzanne*, and, right as she is now, in need of a new keel



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Small boats not included?

As an armchair sailor (but with an abiding interest in all forms of early transport) I was dismayed to learn that the Register of Historic Vessels does not list craft less than 33ft (10m) in length (and under 50 years old).

This was brought home to me by the gentleman selling an 1887 Southampton-built gaff-rigged 18-footer (on eBay!) which would, otherwise than restricted by its length, seem to have the same eligibility for an 'historic' appellation as any other, larger, and sometimes terribly decrepit, vessel.

Larger vessels usually attract support from enthusiasts and fund-raisers who often form a trust of some sort, and occasionally secure grants and other funds from various sources which ensure the preservation of that craft – and all credit to them. Who, though, will record the smaller vessel, where all

the costs, research and work have been met by the individual?

If the effort, time, money, love and skill put into their restoration and repair are to be recognised, and the heritage and recorded history to date are to be preserved, surely there is a need, an urgent need, for some form of similar register to be set up to cater for these smaller craft? I recall from Classic Boat over the years that there are many small boats which fall into this category (*Tom Tit* is one which is lodged in my memory).

Robert Olive, Cold Ash

The National Small Boat Register, administered by the National Maritime Museum Cornwall, was set up some years ago to fill precisely this gap, though its criteria do vary from those of the Historic Vessels Register. Go to www.nmmc.co.uk and click on Collections – Ed

The return of Teal

Hi Dan, you don't know me, but our boats have become acquainted. Back in May, I was idly scanning eBay for classic boats, as one does, and came across a Falmouth Quay Punt named *Teal*. I went to view, as it looked like a 'bargain' might be had (not that I was at all in the market for another boat).

She was gorgeous – but so much work! After a good scratch about, I went to meet the owner, on his steel barge, to say thanks but no thanks, when he produced a copy of *Classic Boat* with a photo of *Teal* on the cover.

I still managed to resist, but his parting words were that she would probably be scrapped, as nobody else had shown interest.

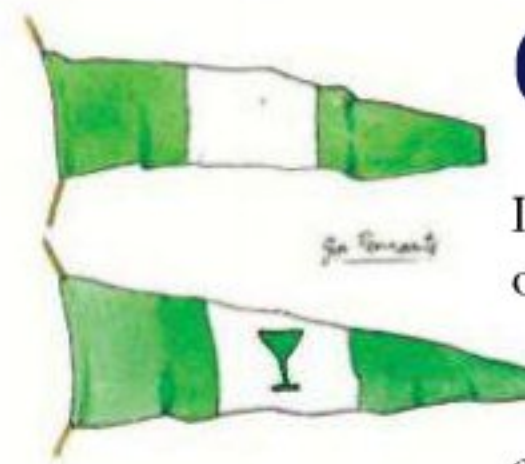
We set off in the car, and my head started to spin. "Pull over, pull over, yes that pub there will do," I said to my mate. I couldn't let this happen, it rested on my shoulders now.

We've moved her to Iron Wharf, Faversham. Work has been slow to get going as my work is seasonal, but now I have started. I was there the

other day, and the crane driver said I was in good company as the boat they had put in front of me belonged to the editor of CB! [See p70 – Ed]
Rob Sargent, London

We were always very fond of Teal – a great can-do story of fix-up and go that we ran about four years ago (CB227, with a cover pic), so it's good to hear she's still around.

Sadly, though, since we first received Rob's letter, we've learned that his personal circumstances have changed, and he's having to sell her on. See Boats for Sale, p78 – Ed



Below: Teal in slings, about to be moved to Faversham

Gin pennant

I was interested to read 'Sternpost' on gin pennants in the October issue.

My father had only to show his green and white flag above the cockpit coaming to send ex-wartime Naval Officers from miles around scurrying for their dinghies. Decades later, I've been known to experiment with one from my own yardarm and, short of any better advice, used an Admiralty code answering pendant, just as shown on your page.

Flags are fun but prepare to be disappointed. There are so few ex-Naval officers around today, you'll be extremely lucky if anyone recognizes your offer of hospitality.

I set about discovering the origins of the gin pennant. Amongst a number of imaginative stories, the most convincing explanation was that the flag was originally an Admiralty code, starboard-hand signal (single green and white vertical strips – so the answering pennant isn't quite correct). The flag was flown from the port yardarm to signal to colleagues on other HM vessels that they were having a party.
Jamie Campbell, Gorleston on Sea

READER'S BOAT OF THE MONTH

Broads One Design at sea

This photo was taken during the Broads One Designs' Sea Week racing at Lowestoft this year. As you will see we can cope with pretty well any conditions, and given the right waves we can get up on the plane. See the nearest boat, number 75 – not bad for a design over 100 years old. Racing is incredibly competitive and close-quarters. Although the boats get spread out, there is a tendency for all to come into very close proximity at the marks, especially the downwind mark, which makes life very interesting. Generally there is a gybe involved.

Tim Mobbs, by email

Thanks – but I got the wrong designer

How wonderful to see our boat in the latest issue! (Boy Boat in Sweden, Letters last month) My boat in your fabulous magazine, wow! And the best of all, I gave a one-year subscription to my best friend on his 50th birthday and this was his first number. But I gave the wrong designer. She is from the hand of Tore Herlin, not Tore Holm as I wrote.

Hansi Ohlsson, Stockholm

Lots more readers' boats on the classicboat.co.uk website – check out the new Our Boats feature





Calling upper class

Dave Selby wonders why using his radio makes him talk posh

Sailing makes you wet. It also brings on self-realisation and one of the things I've discovered about myself is that fear turns me posh. It's even odder that one of the things that frighten me most about sailing is the prospect of having to use the VHF.

Men seem to love using the VHF. After all, it's an acronym, a gadget, and a great way to show off mastery of the alphabet. Plus you can get a 'stifficate in it, which is virtually an ology. Yet for me it brings on a much more curious impulse sequence – paralysis, followed by talking posh, which is something that birth, lack of education and life experience haven't managed to make me.

Basically, so I'm told, once I have a VHF in my paw I turn into Bertie Wooster, which is an entirely new twist on the classic fight or flight response.



**“One of the things
that frighten me most
is using the VHF”**

Ever since I started sailing I've tried to conquer the fear. Keith, one of my favourite skippers from my crewing days, always used to have me call up marinas for berths – I think because that way it wasn't him lying about the length of his 41ft boat – which was amazingly roomy for a 36-footer. Once, approaching Boulogne, I actually managed a whole VHF sentence in Frenglish, to which Keith said: “That was very good, Dave. Next time press the transmit button.”

But it's my poshness that really puzzles me. And I think it's prompted by the squelch sound that reminds me of crackling radio transmissions in old war movies where upper-crust fighter-pilot heroes like Douglas Bader say things like: “Badger's bought it. Let's go home.”

That can be the only explanation why I make involuntary VHF outbursts like: “Bandits at three o'clock, custard creams at four,” which doesn't really help you get a berth.

But my greatest fear is being asked to spell my boat name, which is why East-Coast harbourmasters ask me to spell it. My boat's called *Marlin* which, on a good day, in my very own infinitely rich and varied Tourette's phonetic alphabet might come out something like: “Mango-Acrobat-Rolox-Lobster-Inglenook-Nonce.” On a bad day it's unrepeatable.

To which Bradwell harbourmaster might respond: “Nice to see you again Mango Acrobat; proceed to pontoon crackle-squelch, crackle-squelch-side to.”

To which I then query: “Say again which pontoon? Is that D for Dunce or E for Effort?”

“Both correct,” comes the reply, followed by crackling – followed by cackling.

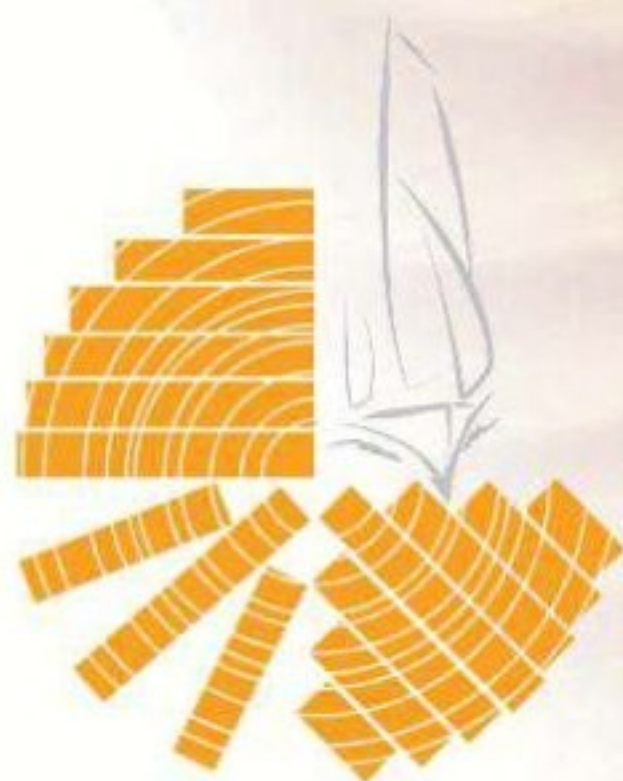
It's all very traumatic, and while all this is going on with your VHF in one hand, that only leaves one other hand free to put the fenders out, tie on your lines and steer the boat through a serpentine channel where all the buoys have been removed for summer servicing.

All of which means there's no chance to scribble down the pontoon letter; and that brings us to one of the immutable laws of the universe. The very moment you enter a marina is the very moment you forget the pontoon letter, whether it's upstream or downstream, and which side to you're supposed to be. There are no exceptions to this rule.

What's needed is simplification, and I'm reminded of that popular training acronym, KISS, which I think stands for something like: “Keep It Stupid, Simple,” and which I've never really understood. And along those lines I thought it might help reduce my VHF trauma if I changed my boat's name to *Mayday*. That way, if the worst came to the worst all I'd have to say is: “Mayday, Mayday, Mayday, this is *Mayday*, *Mayday*, over.” Simple. I suppose I could also call my boat *Pan-Pan*, but that might confuse matters.

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